



A Global evaluation of the drinks hospitality industry

*Understanding the strengths and challenges
of the sector to enable employers to bridge
the gap to success*



ANNA SEBASTIAN
HOSPITALITY



About the report

- Quantitative online survey conducted, completed by hospitality drinks industry employees to determine perceptions of roles, challenges faced and things employers can do to increase support
- Employees qualified for the survey if they were over 18 and currently work in the industry (or have worked in the industry within the last 6 months)
- Sample size: 743
- Fieldwork conducted: February – April 2025



Report Content

- Executive summary & infographic slides
- Evaluating satisfaction in hospitality roles
- The importance of mental health support
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Enhancing safety in the workplace
- Career progression
- Improving retention rates



Executive summary

NIQ



The hospitality drinks industry is more than just a job, it's an industry where employees can build long-term, successful careers – even for those who fell into the industry

Joined due to a passion for the industry

58%

39%

Fell into the industry

This group have a pre-existing strong passion for hospitality and find a role that aligns with their career aspirations, they already see how hospitality roles suits and benefits them.

These employees join the industry by chance, with a higher proportion of females. This group frequently go on to develop a passion for the industry, indicating that passion can be discovered.

Two-thirds of employees go on to build lasting careers in the industry, whether they entered with a passion for hospitality or discovered it along the way.

Key findings:

- Whether employees enter the hospitality industry driven by a clear passion or simply fall into it by chance, the journey often leads to the same destination.
- Those who start with a strong sense of purpose feel fulfilled in their roles as it meets their expectations and those who enter more incidentally, often women, frequently develop and discover a passion over time.
- As employees spend more time in the industry, their roles increasingly align with long-term career goals.

So what?

The hospitality drinks industry is perfectly placed to build long term careers. As employees gain experience, their sense of purpose and alignment with the industry grows, showing that with the right support, passion and commitment can be nurtured over time.

There is a critical period where retention is at risk so this is the key milestone where efforts should be focused on improving training to alleviate burnout, and defining career pathways to support progression with tangible tools

Critical period				
1-3 years	4-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	30+ years
At this beginning stage, optimism surrounding role is high, but likewise is uncertainty. Employees are less likely to consider leaving their role, but this is often whilst they settle in and learn the basics.	The second stage marks the ‘critical period’ where dissatisfaction spikes and employees are most likely to consider leaving their roles. This is often where burnout peaks and employees recognise they haven’t been provided with adequate training and opportunities to progress, so they view their role as temporary. This is the fundamental stage where retention efforts should be strongest.	Consideration of leaving starts to drop here, yet there is still a high proportion of employees who are considering leaving the industry, so issues have not been effectively resolved. The drop in consideration of leaving suggests that some employees have managed to access more training/ progression and therefore have shifted ‘temporary’ perceptions.	At this stage, one third are now fully committed to their roles. However, despite a decline in considerations of leaving, the fact that these thoughts persist indicates that the industry’s deep-rooted challenges continue to impact even its most experienced employees. Progress has been made, but the underlying issues remain unresolved.	Once employees reach 30+ years, consideration around leaving is lowest across all groups. Yet, there are still 2 in 10 expressing a desire to leave, highlighting the persistent impact of key challenges over time. This suggests that tenure alone doesn’t guarantee retention, and long-standing issues must be addressed to truly secure loyalty.

There are still **serious** challenges to address, employees need more than policies, they need genuine support, clear processes, and trusted contacts they can turn to when issues arise

Mental health impacts

85%

Of employees think mental health support is important, but only

40%

Agree that their workplace has enough mental health support available

Diversity & inclusion

3 in 10

female employees have been prevented from career progression due to discrimination or bias in the workplace

Feeling unsafe at work with no support

3 in 10

Employees have felt unsafe at work due to harassment or other issues, and of those that reported the issue to their employer,

73%

Felt that the issue was not resolved

Support for parents

76%

Of parents have had to turn down work opportunities due to parenting or family commitments

How can the industry address the key serious challenges?

Employees need to feel genuinely supported with clear processes, visible action, and trusted contacts who can help when issues arise. For challenges like harassment or discrimination to be effectively resolved, the industry must prioritise accessible reporting, consistent follow-through, and a culture where speaking up leads to change. Building trust starts with showing that concerns are taken seriously and acted on.

Fixable gaps are holding the industry back, there are clear steps that employers can take to nurture employee career journeys

4. Clear, structured pathways for career progression will be essential to build alignment with employee career goals and therefore promote retention. By outlining transparent steps for advancement, employers help employees understand how they can grow within the company and the industry.

1. Critical period where risk of employees leaving can be lessened by increasing training and progression earlier on within career journeys

1. The critical period represents a pivotal opportunity: by proactively offering tailored training, clear development pathways, and meaningful progression during this phase, employers can strengthen employee commitment. Addressing these needs earlier helps employees visualise a future in the industry and increases the likelihood of them building long-term, fulfilling careers.

2. Training can be enhanced so that employees feel they receive adequate support and have full confidence in their roles

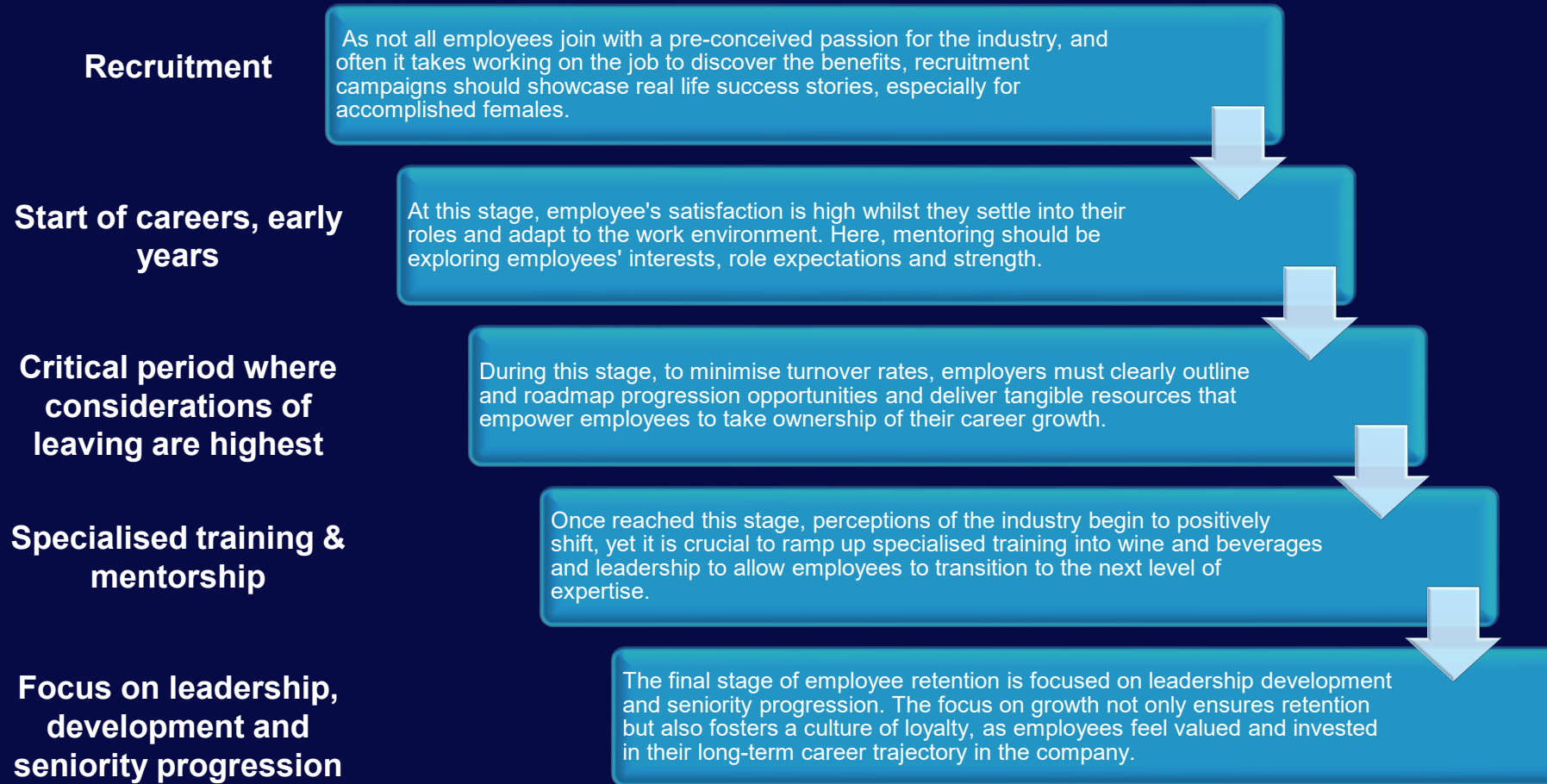
2. Improve training programs to be more comprehensive by going beyond basic training, providing clear next steps for career progression, leadership development, and specialised skills to ensure employees are well-equipped for success. Offering hands-on, real-world training that is directly applicable to day-to-day responsibilities will also foster engagement and retention.

3. Employees should be given access to and encouraged to complete industry competitions and awards

3. Industry competitions and awards serve as powerful motivators, providing employees with opportunities to showcase their skills, gain recognition, and foster a sense of accomplishment. By making these competitions more accessible and encouraging participation, employers can boost morale and engagement.

4. Progression processes can be made clearer to employees with structured mentoring to increase longevity and build long term career loyalty

There's a real opportunity to lead the change as retention hinges on support and perceptions do evolve as employees grow their careers



78%

Of employees who previously perceived the industry as a temporary role have now positively shifted this perception.

(Even after acknowledging key challenges around demanding hours, high stress and turnover rates – demonstrating a profound passion for the sector.)

Infographic slides

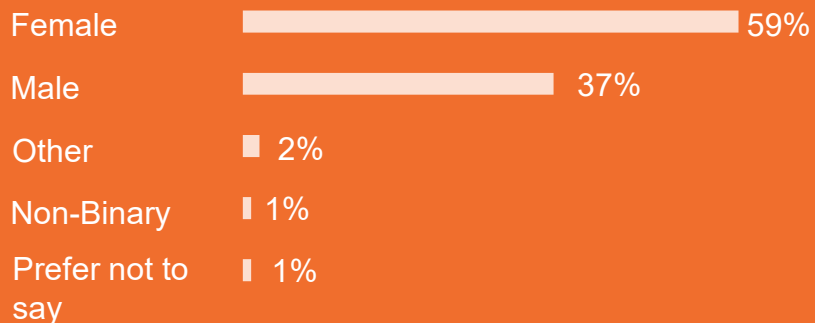
NIQ



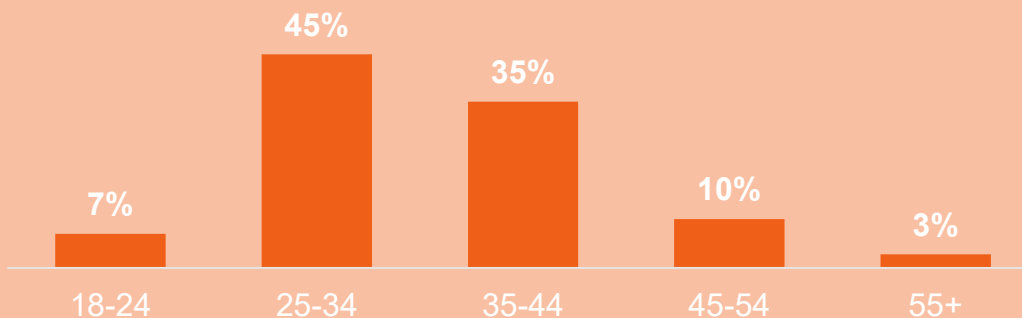
Demographic profile of hospitality drinks industry employees surveyed

Employees were largely female, within the millennial age bracket and spanned across the globe

Gender



Age

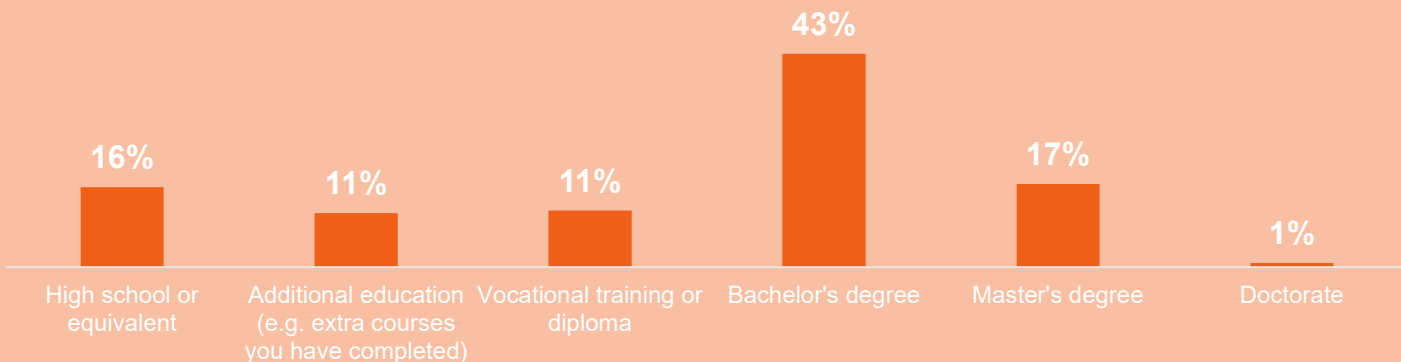


Individuals from

20

different global regions

Level of education



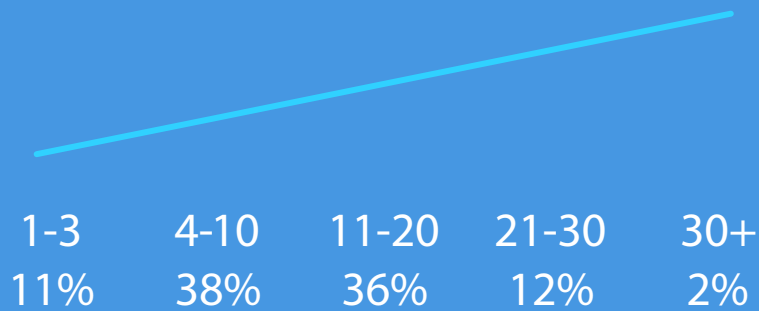
How would you describe your drinking habits?



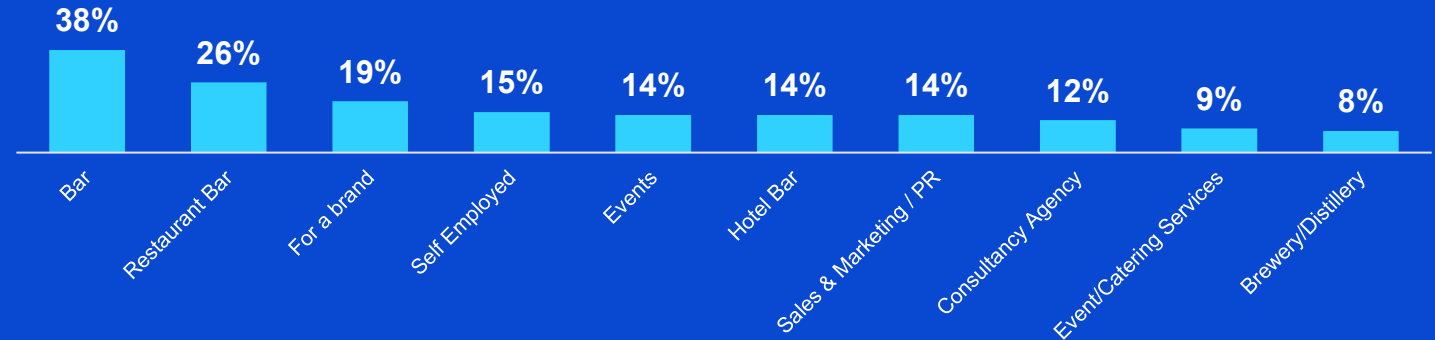
Employee details of employment within the hospitality drinks industry

The majority of employees had between 4-20 years experience, with a range of professions and size of organisation

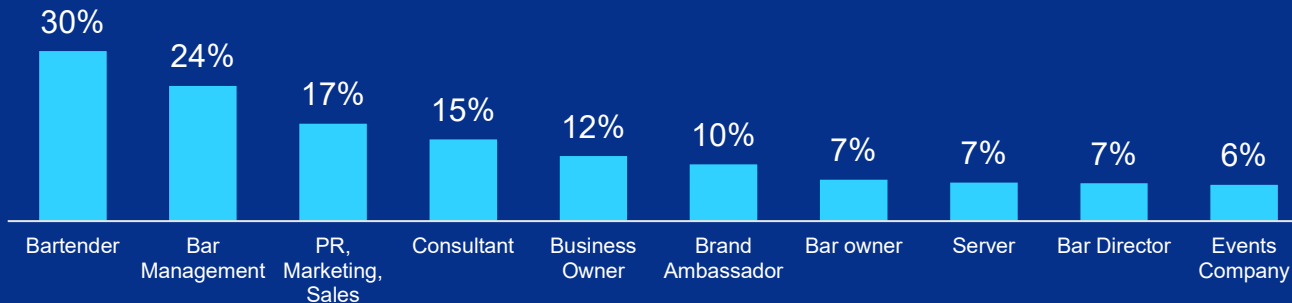
Length of time in industry (years)



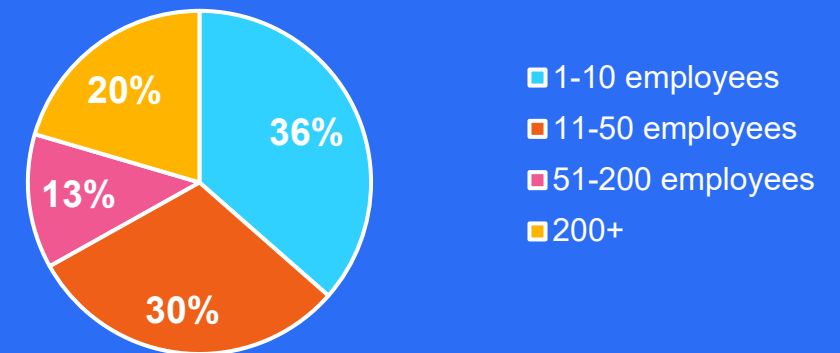
Top 10 workplaces



Top 10 professions



Number of employees at organisation



The longer individuals remain in the sector, the more committed they become to it, reflecting the industry's strength as a genuinely rewarding environment for long-term career development

Top reasons employees join the industry and perceptions positively shift with time in role

Joined due to a passion for the industry

58%

39%

Fell into the industry

Two-thirds of all employees go on to build lasting careers in the industry, whether they entered with a passion for hospitality or discovered it along the way.

85%

Of employees agree that their current role in the hospitality drinks industry **aligns with their career goals**.

78%

Of employees who previously perceived the industry as a **temporary role** have now **positively shifted this perception**.

(Even after acknowledging key challenges around demanding hours, high stress and turnover rates – demonstrating a profound passion for the sector.)



3 in 10

Employees have felt unsafe at work due to harassment or other issue



Of those that reported the issue to their employer,

73%

Felt that the issue was not resolved



85%

Of employees think mental health support is important, but only



40%

Agree that their workplace has enough mental health support available



Work-life balance is the

#2

Contributing factor to employee negative wellbeing



49%

Of employees are **not** currently satisfied with their work-life balance



22%

Of the employees surveyed are parents



76%

Of parents have had to turn down work opportunities due to parenting or family commitments



3 in 10

Female employees have been prevented from career progression due to discrimination in the workplace



*"Being a woman leader I do feel like the industry is still **more aligned to reporting to male bosses**, and hence that has always been a challenge."*

Evaluating satisfaction in hospitality roles

NIQ

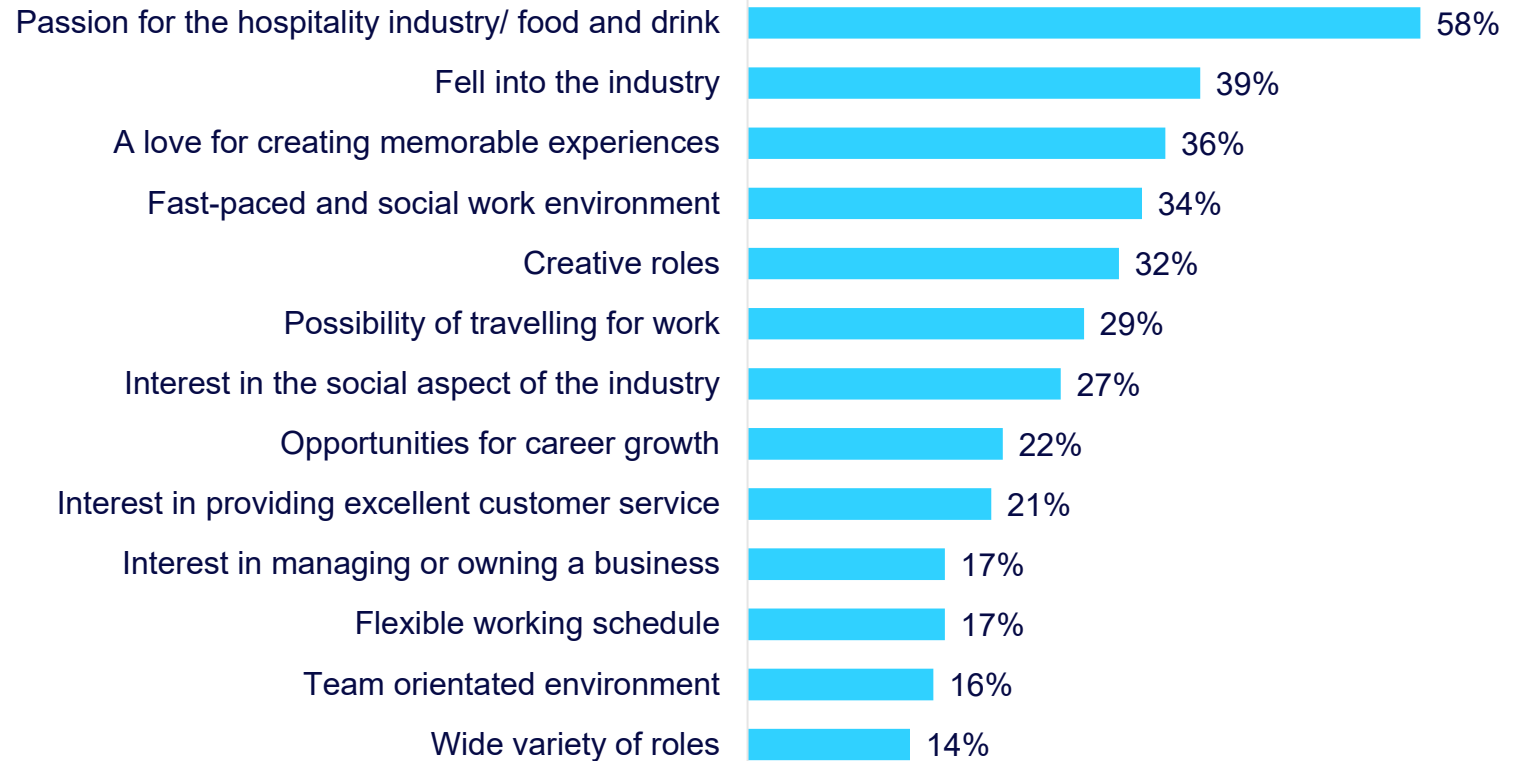


“No two days are the same -
no monotony.”

“Multi dimensional
profession.”

Many employees join the industry out of a genuine passion for hospitality, while 2 in 5 enter the field more by chance than by choice

Top reasons individuals choose to join the hospitality/ drinks industry



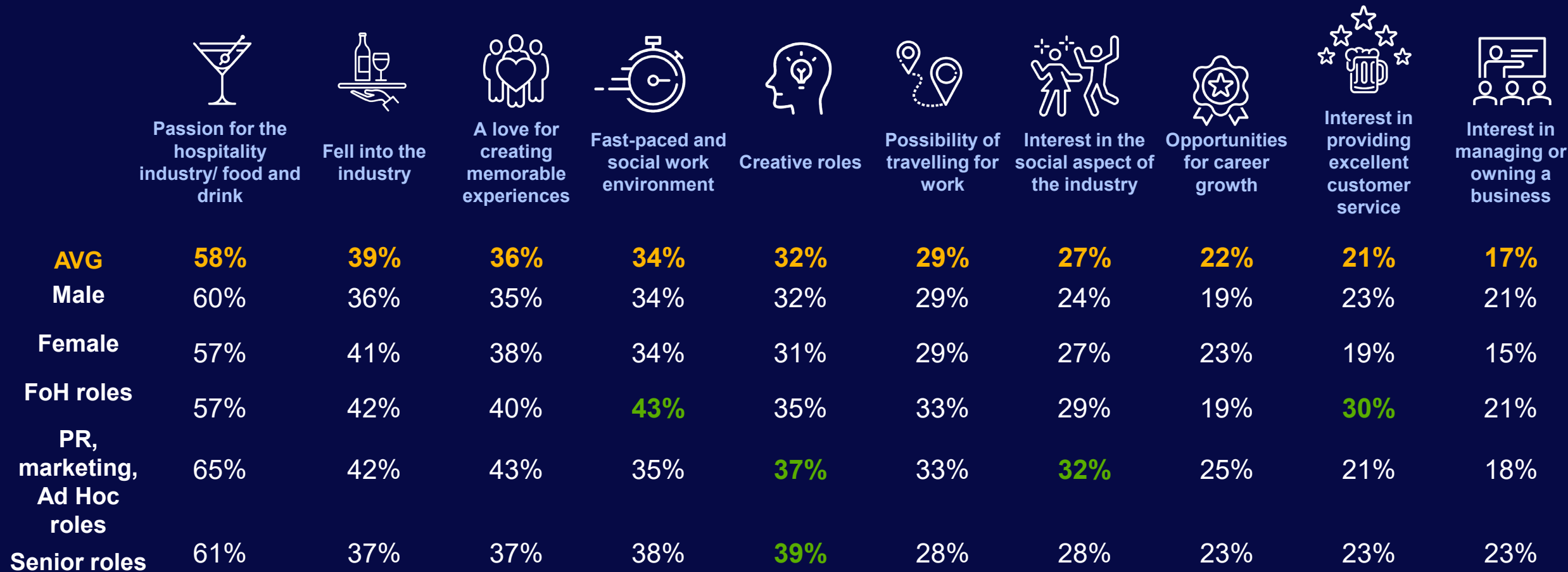
CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 743



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

For FoH roles, the fast-paced environment and interest in customer service is a key joining driver and for ad hoc roles it's the opportunities for creativity and career growth

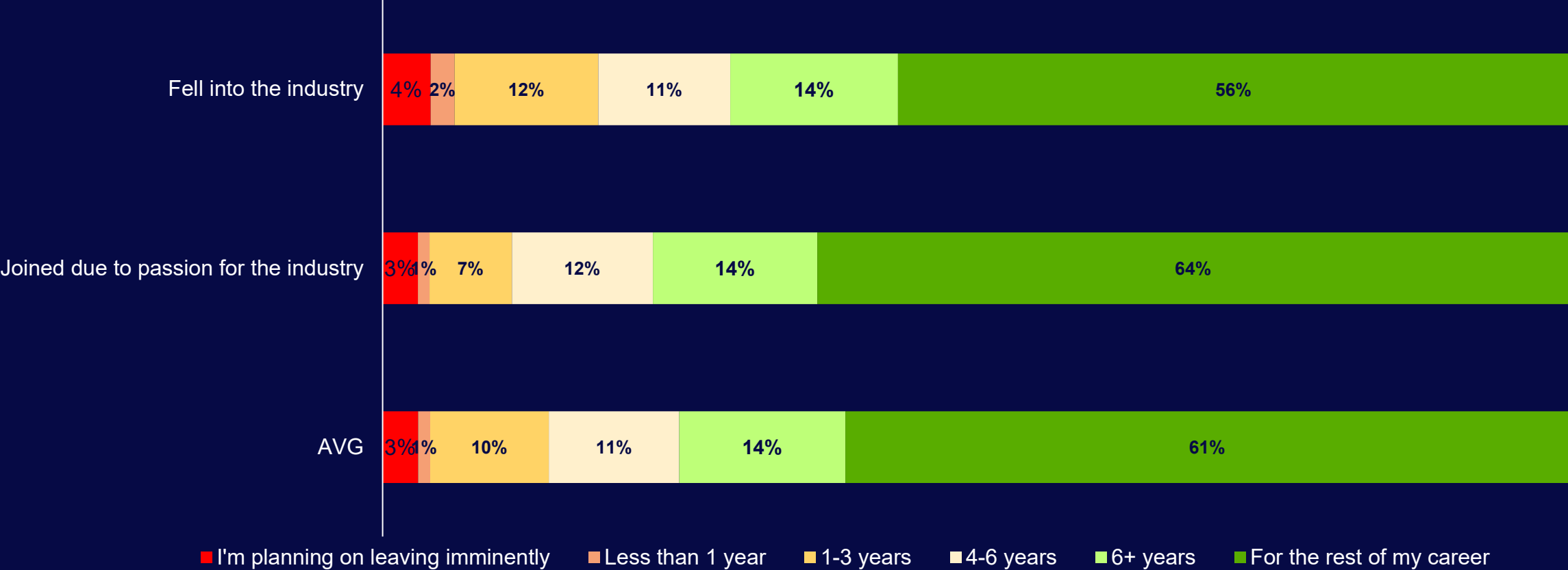
Top reasons individuals choose to join the hospitality/ drinks industry
Split by gender and job role



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 743

This passion is reflected in the fact that two-thirds plan to work in hospitality for the rest of their careers, and this is also fairly consistent across those that fell into the industry – suggesting that passion can be discovered

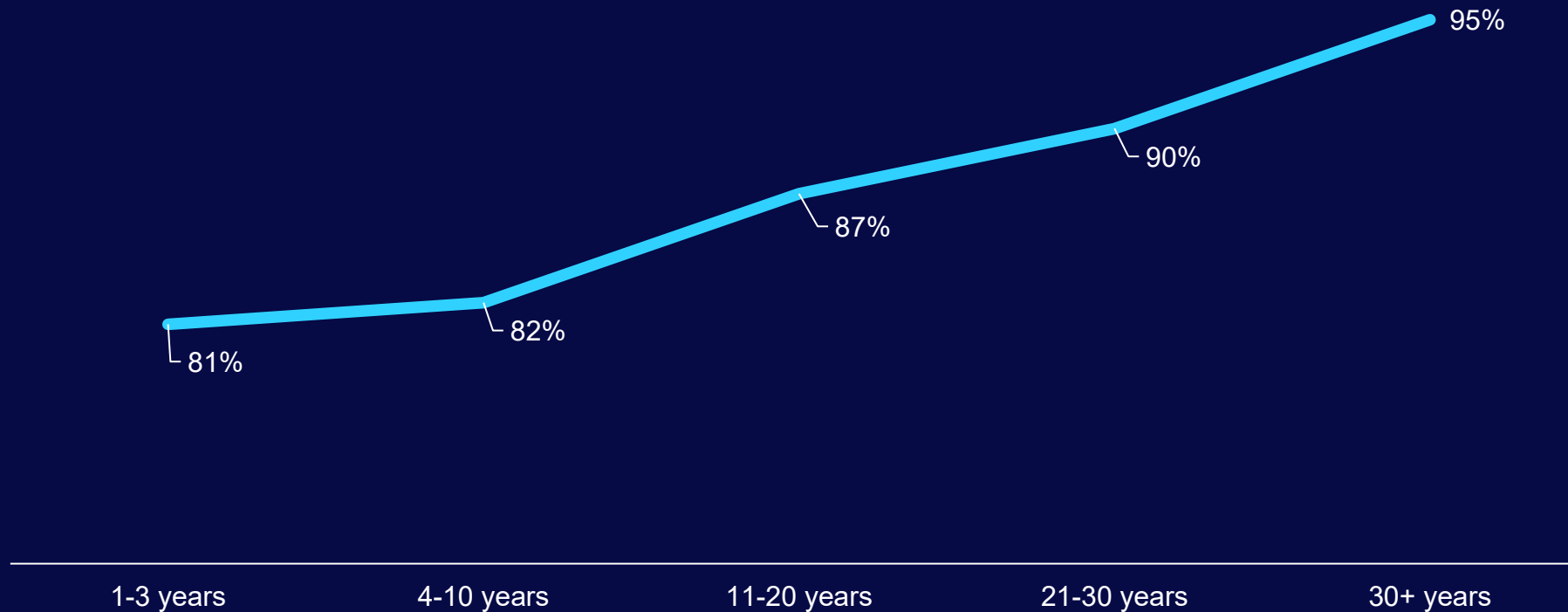
Length of time employees expect to work within the industry



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 290-743

Hospitality roles align with individuals' career aspirations, and this increases with time in industry, so with the right support to progress, the potential for long-term retention grows

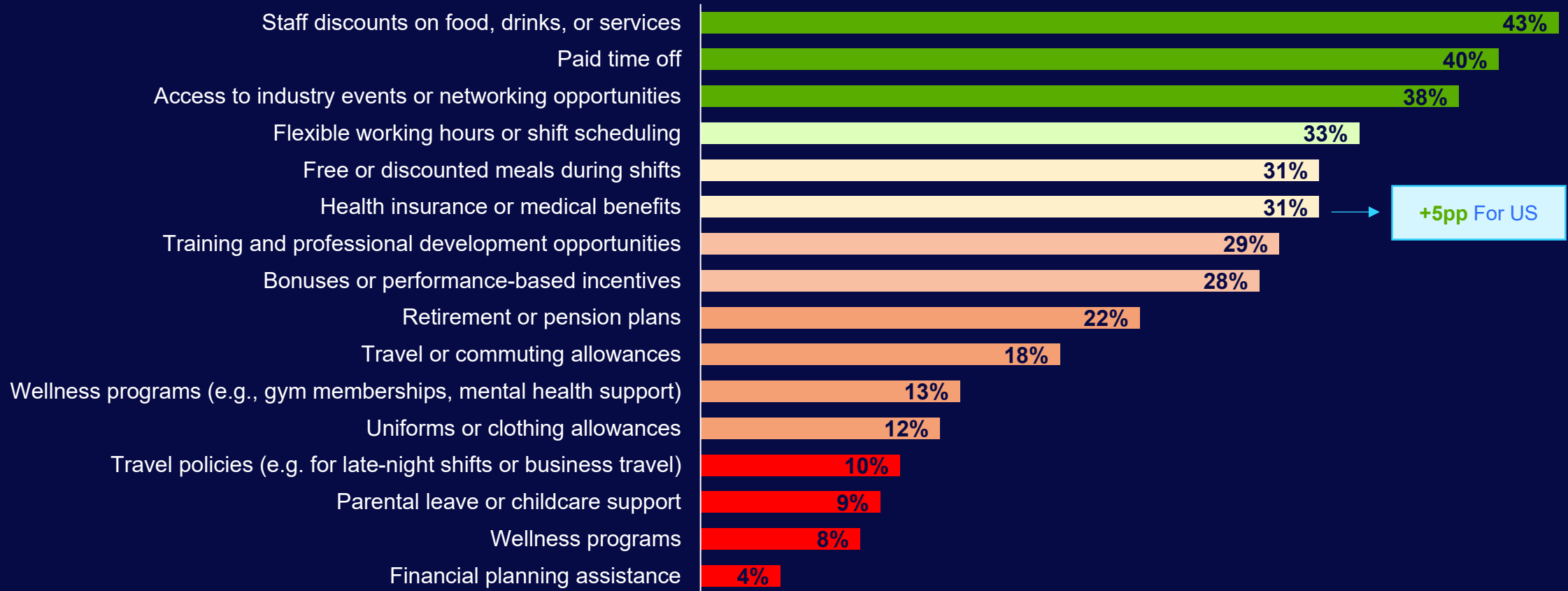
*Current role aligning with career goals (Strongly aligns and somewhat aligns)
Split by hospitality experience in years*



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 743

Discounts on food and health insurance are key benefits, yet there is still a noticeable gap when it comes to support in areas like wellness programs, parental leave, and travel - benefits that could play a significant role in long-term retention and employee wellbeing

What are the main benefits you receive from your employer? Please select all that apply



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 743

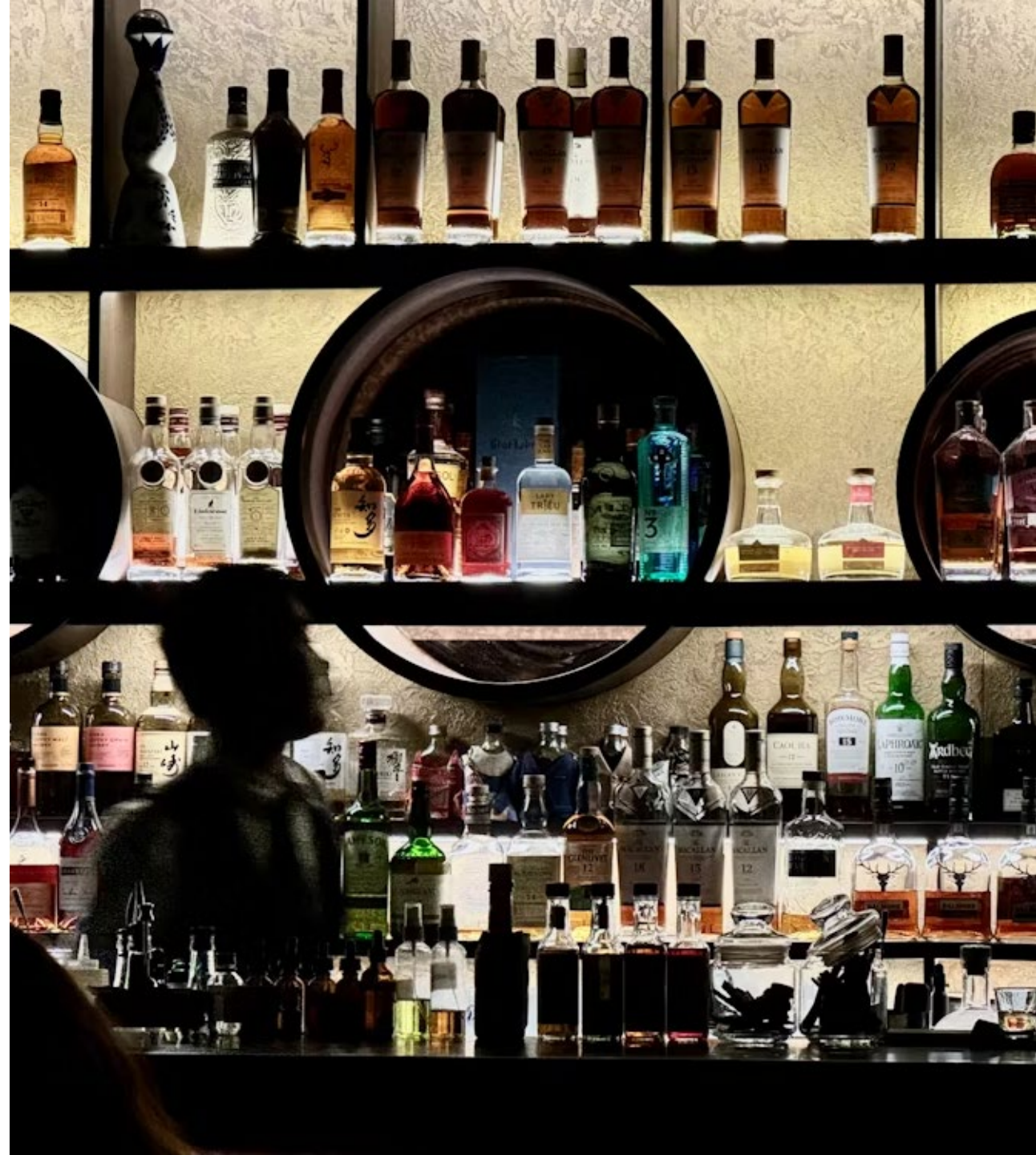
7 in 10 employees have considered leaving the industry at some point in their careers, suggesting there are key issues to address to improve retention rates

72%

Of employees have considered the leaving the hospitality drinks industry at some point during their career

CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 581

NIQ



The 4-10 year experience marks the 'critical period' where employees are most likely to consider leaving, so this is the key milestone where efforts should be focused on improving training to alleviate burnout

Whether staff have considered leaving the hospitality/ drinks industry

Critical period

High optimism at this stage, low leaving considerations as employees settle into their roles

Critical period where dissatisfaction spikes, likely due to peak burnout & lack of training

Consideration of leaving starts to reduce as employees feel more confident in their roles

One third are now committed to their roles, yet there are still 4 in 10 employees considering leaving

While employees with 30+ years of experience are the least likely to consider leaving, 2 in 10 still express a desire to leave, highlighting the persistent impact of key challenges over time

1-3 years

4-10 years

11-20 years

21-30 years

30+ years

Yes, I am still considering leaving the industry

35%

44%

37%

38%

19%

Yes, but not any more

23%

34%

35%

30%

25%

No

42%

22%

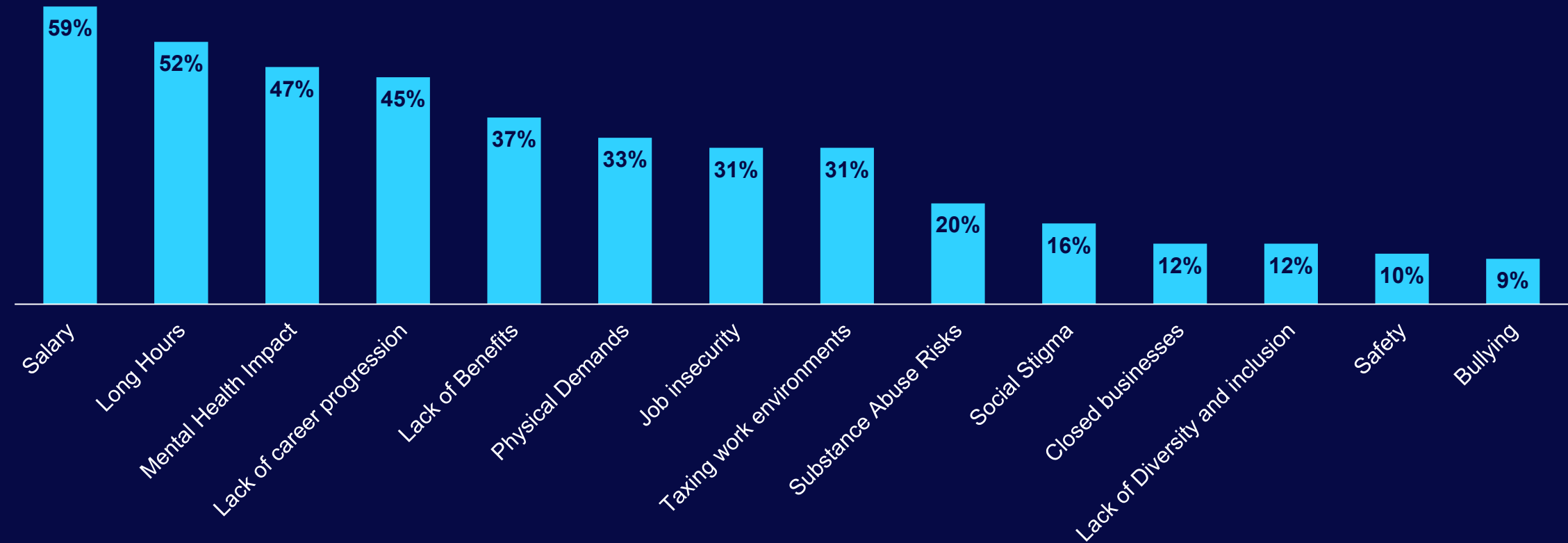
28%

32%

56%

Impacts of long hours, and subsequent work-life balance as well as mental health and lack of progression have all contributed to employees considering leaving the industry

Reasons staff have considered leaving the hospitality/ drinks industry



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 415

Evaluating satisfaction in hospitality roles

Summary:

Many employees enter the hospitality industry driven by a genuine passion for creating memorable experiences, though 2 in 5 enter more by chance than by choice. Two thirds plan to work in hospitality for the rest of their career, indicating that for the majority, it is not just a temporary job but a deliberate and passionate career choice.

This data is consistent even for those who fell into the industry, which suggests that once employees join the industry, they enjoy their roles and want to continue their careers – over half of those who fell into the industry have chosen to build a career. Once employees are immersed in the environment, collaborating with teams, engaging with guests, and growing their skill, they often find a sense of purpose and belonging that encourages them to stay.

This reinforces the idea that hospitality is an industry where passion can be discovered and positive work experiences play a crucial role in shaping long-term career decisions.

Actions for the industry:

1. **Promote passion early:** Highlight real stories and the long-term potential of hospitality careers during recruitment to attract employees who see beyond 'temporary' roles.
2. **Showcase hospitality as a career, not a stopgap:** Create campaigns that spotlight how roles align with personal growth and aspirations, helping candidates see the bigger picture from the outset.
3. **Close the benefits gap:** Expand support beyond core perks by offering wellness programs, parental leave, and travel benefits that enhance quality of life and boost retention.
4. **Protect the critical period (4–10 years):** Introduce targeted interventions, such as progression plans and mentoring, to combat burnout, increase satisfaction, and keep talent engaged during this high-risk phase with the aim of reducing high considerations of leaving.

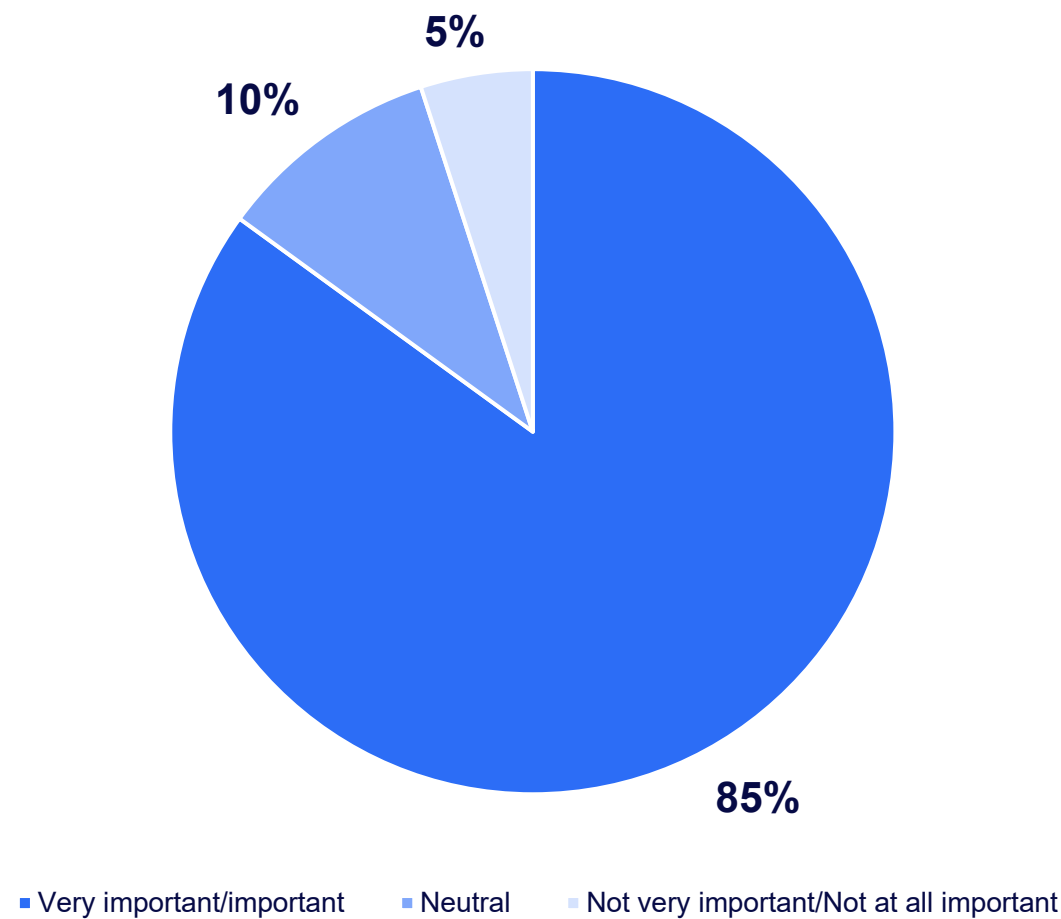
The importance of mental health support

NIQ



**Mental health support is crucial for hospitality workers.
Recognising its importance, it's essential for workplaces to
prioritise mental health support and necessary services**

How important industry staff think mental health support is in the workplace

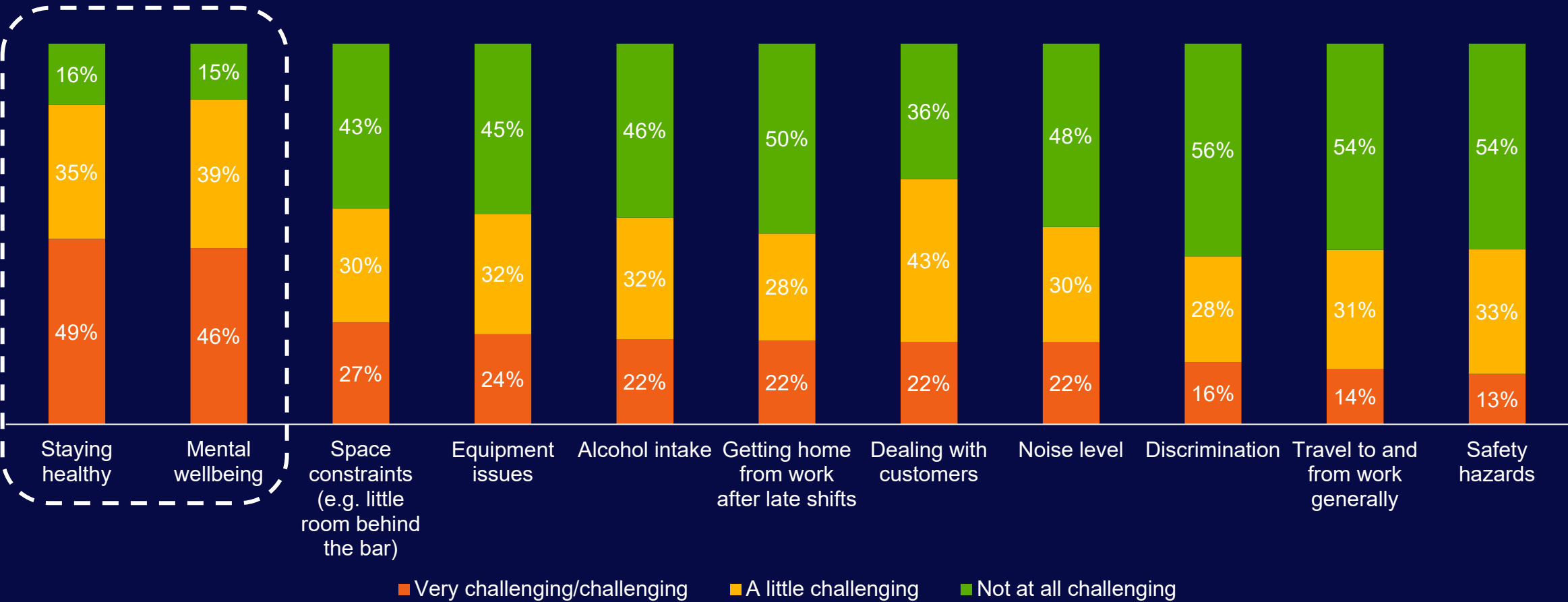


CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 743



The biggest challenges staff face are managing their mental wellbeing and maintaining good health, highlighting the importance for mental health support within the hospitality industry

Challenging issues in the work environment



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 650 - 659

Promoting work-life balance, strong leadership, and mental health support helps to reduce stress and improve staff wellbeing

Main factors that negatively impact mental health in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 249 - 732

49%

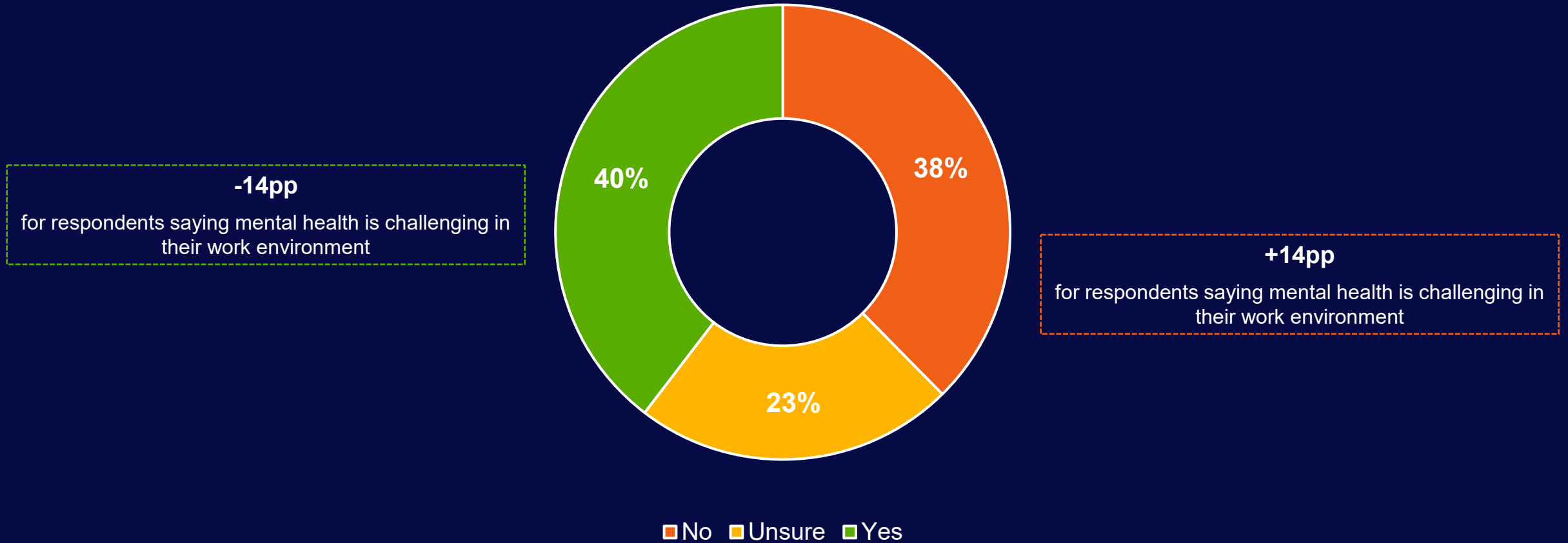
Of employees are
currently **not**
satisfied with their
work-life balance

CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 732



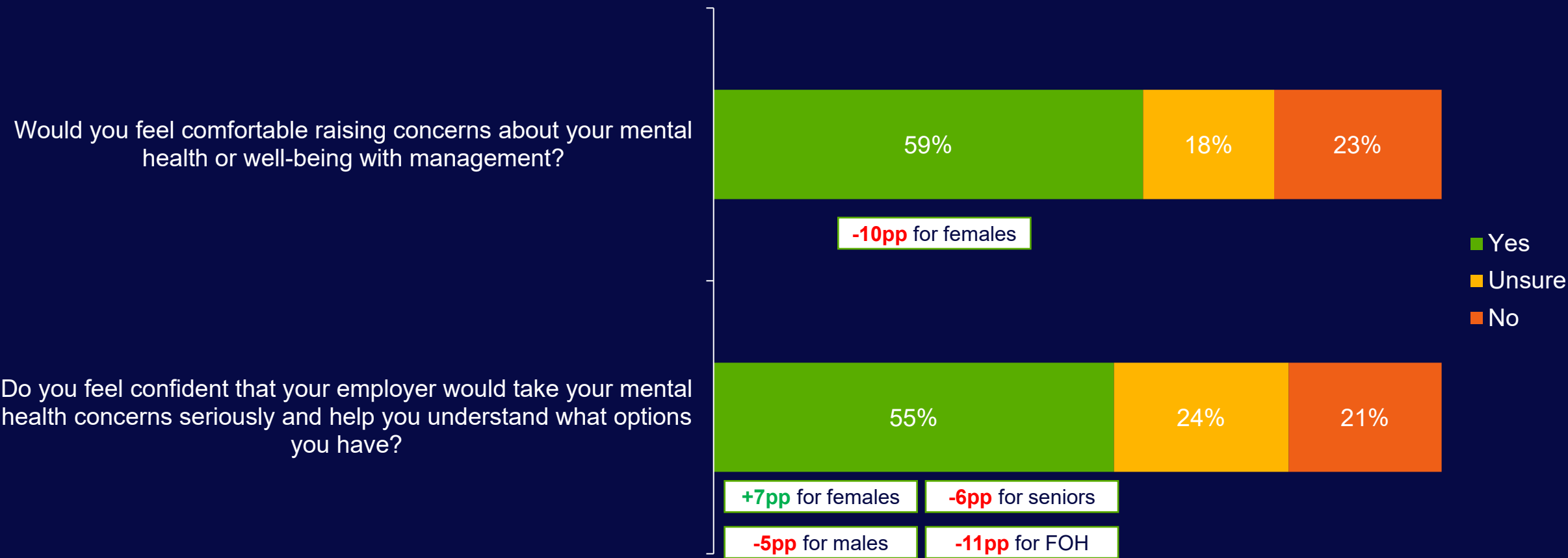
Despite the clear importance, mental health support in the hospitality industry is lacking, with nearly half of affected workers feeling unsupported

Whether there are policies in place to support mental health



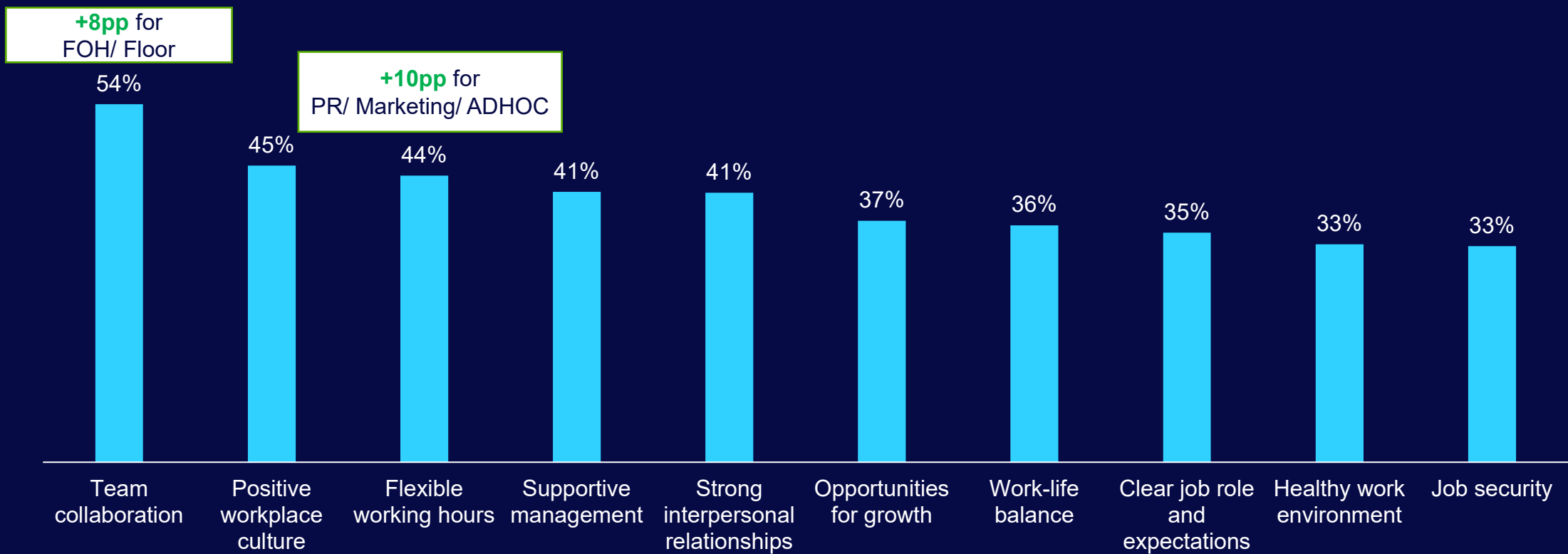
Four in ten employees would not feel comfortable raising their mental health concerns and almost half believe they wouldn't be listened to or taken seriously, especially FOH employees

Comfortability and confidence in raising concerns about mental health in the workplace



Team collaboration, a positive workplace culture with strong leadership and support can encourage employees to speak openly about mental health concerns in their place of work and improve the industry culture

Main factors that positively impact mental health in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 727

Evaluating the importance and benefits of mental health support in hospitality

Summary:

Many hospitality workers acknowledge the importance of mental health support in the workplace. With maintaining physical and mental wellbeing among the biggest challenges in the industry, it is essential to promote a healthy work-life balance, strong leadership and accessible mental health resources.

Despite this need, mental health support within hospitality remains limited. Nearly half of those experiencing mental health issues feel unsupported at work and many feel uncomfortable raising their concerns, fearing they won't be taken seriously.

Actions for the industry:

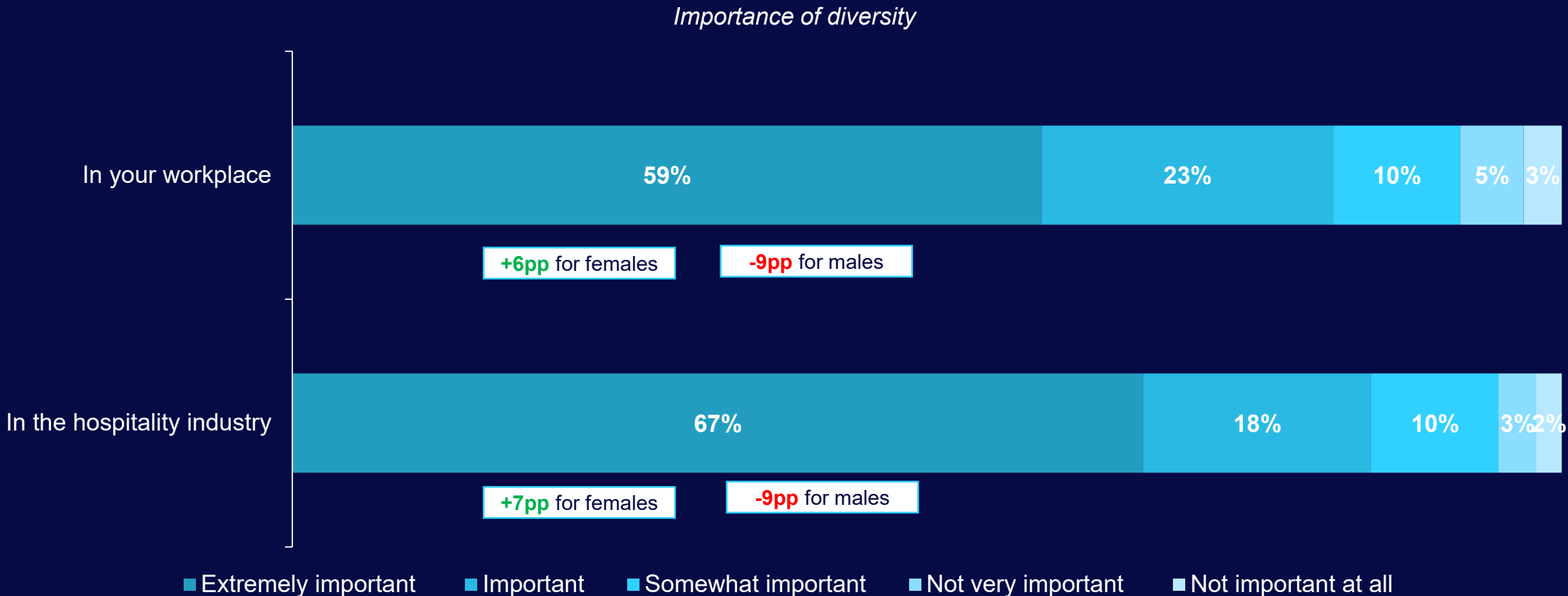
1. **Promote work-life balance:** It is important to encourage manageable shifts, co-operation and given time to support overall wellbeing.
2. **Invest in leadership training:** Equip managers with the skills to identify mental health concerns, respond appropriately when these issues have been reported and create supportive environments, fostering open communication.
3. **Reduce stigma around mental health:** Use awareness campaigns, regular training and regular check-ins to normalise mental health discussions in the workplace to enable staff to feel comfortable and willing to share any issues they may be facing
4. **Establish clear policies and procedures:** Implement and communicate mental health policies that outline support pathways and promote early intervention

Diversity, equity and inclusion

NIQ



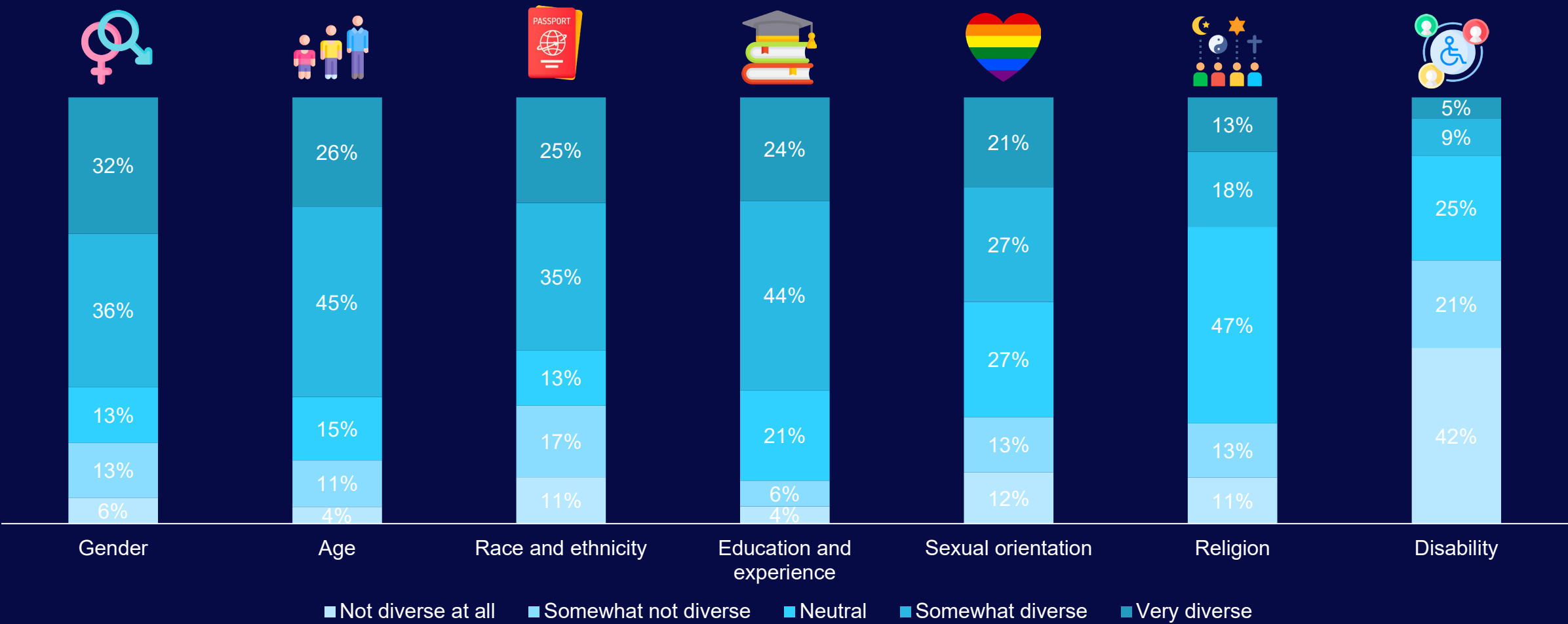
Diversity enriches hospitality and drinks industries by fostering inclusivity and cultural variety, with particular importance from female employees



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 256 - 690

While age and gender are the most diverse characteristics, there is improvement needed for those with disabilities, religion and sexual orientation to be represented in the workplace

Diversity of the following characteristics in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 639 - 646

66%

of respondents believe that there are fair opportunities for all employees

+10pp for FOH/ Floor

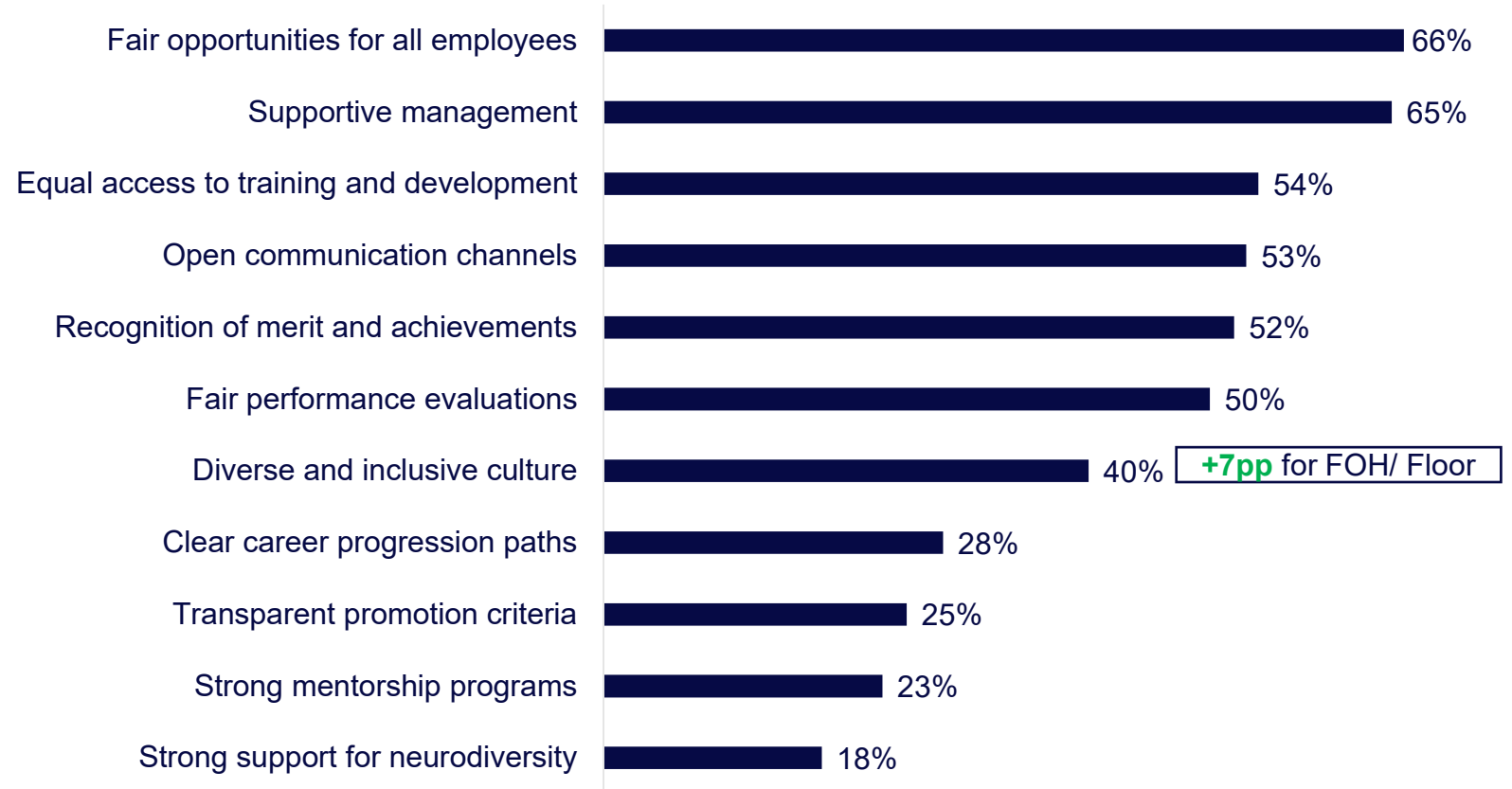
+6pp for Senior Staff

-15pp for Females

+9pp for Males

Two-thirds of staff feel that there are fair opportunities, however males have a significantly more positive view of equality in the workplace compared to females

Reasons why employees think there are equal opportunities in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 169 - 659



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

55%

of respondents agreed that all employees have equal opportunities for advancement in their workplace

+9pp for males

Staff generally feel valued in daily decisions but less so in management decision making, involving all members of staff in decision-making would create a more equitable environment

How included and valued staff feel in their workplace in the following areas

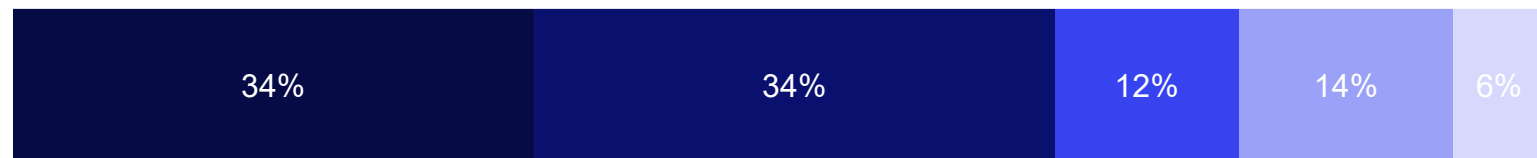
In day-to-day decisions with colleagues



-8pp for FOH/ Floor

+5pp for Males

With management and their decision making



-10pp for FOH/ Floor

■ Very valued ■ Somewhat valued ■ Neither, nor ■ Not very valued ■ Not valued at all

CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 248 - 659



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Front of House staff seek enhanced training and education opportunities that would help them advance and secure promotions, strengthening their career paths in hospitality

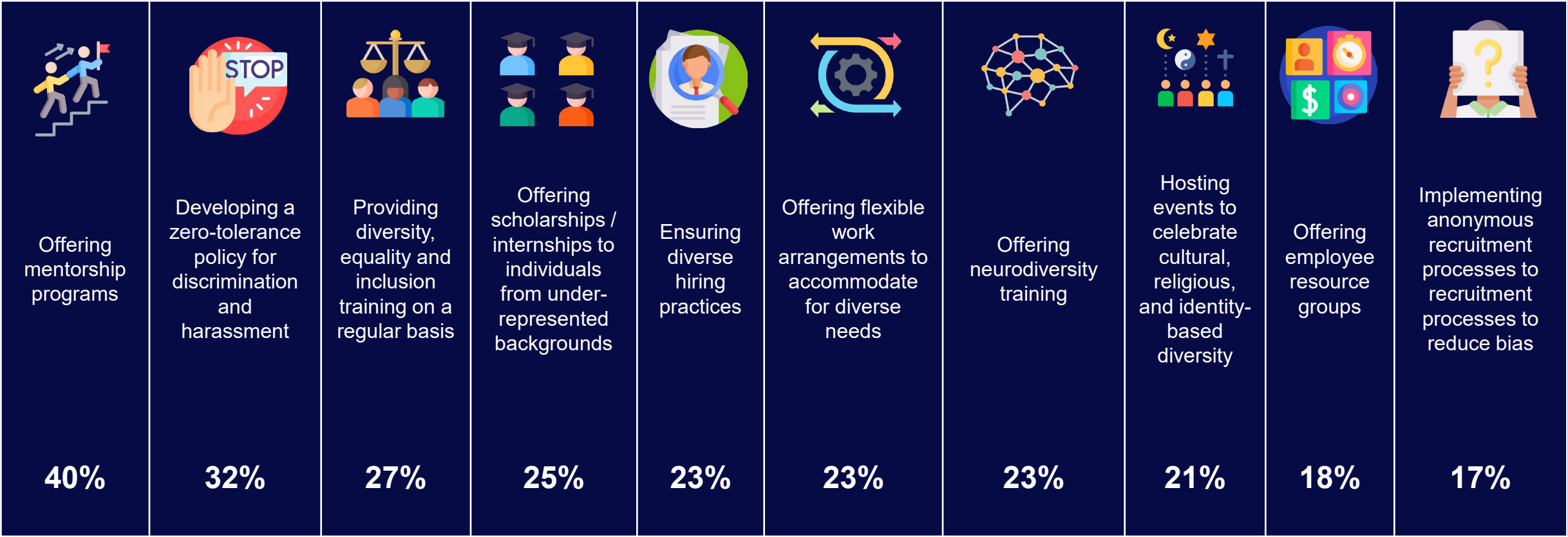
Top 10 aspects of diversity and inclusion that need the most improvement in your workplace
(Indexed against FOH/ Floor)



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 629

Overall, in order to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace, it is essential to equip management and leadership with the necessary tools and training, implement clear zero-tolerance policies and encourage staff to adhere to them

Initiatives that could be implemented to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace



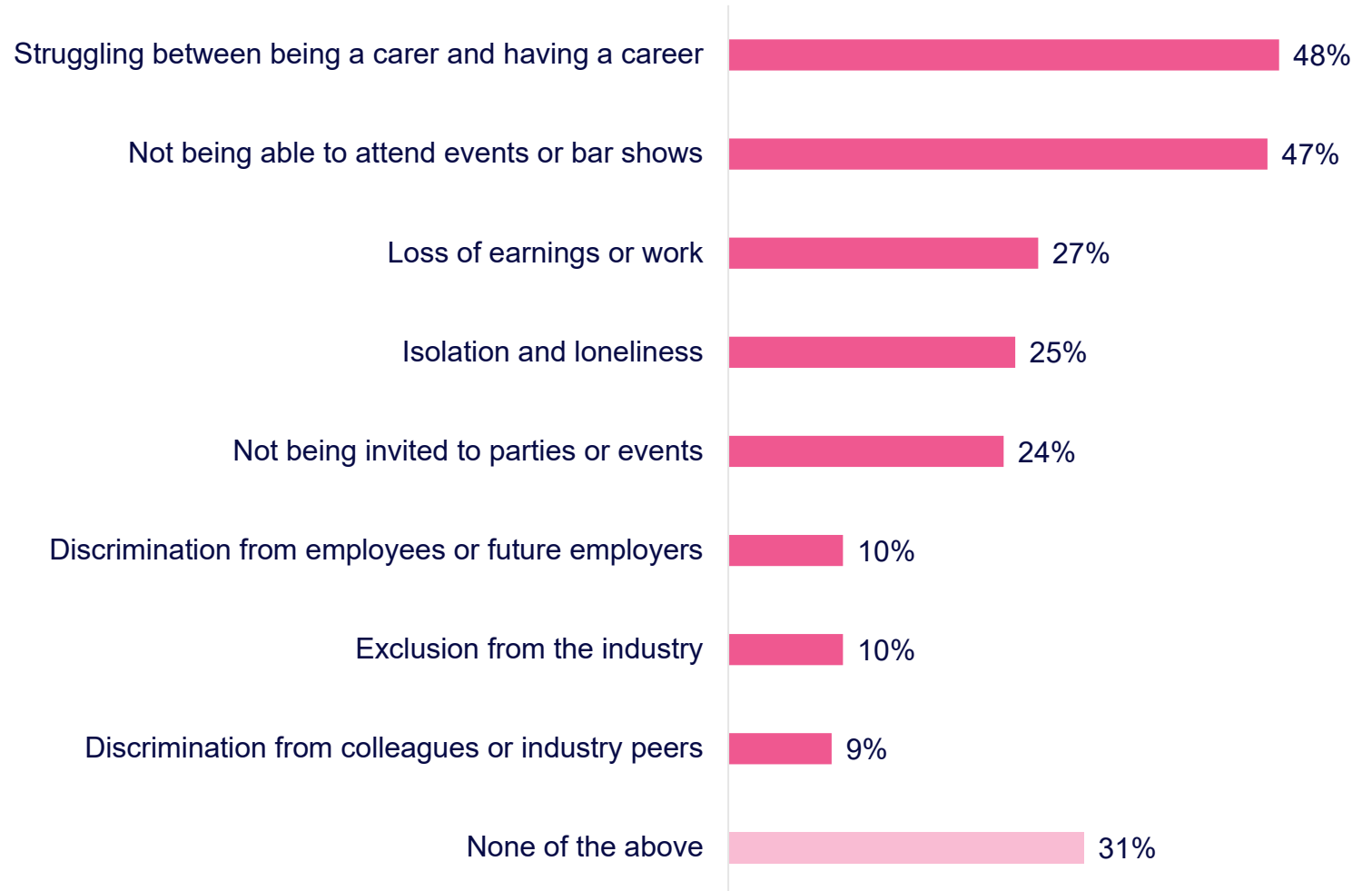
CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 614

76%

of the parents surveyed have had to turned down work opportunities due to parenting or family commitments

Employees with children report loss of opportunities due to family commitments

Experiences in the workplace since starting a family



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 157

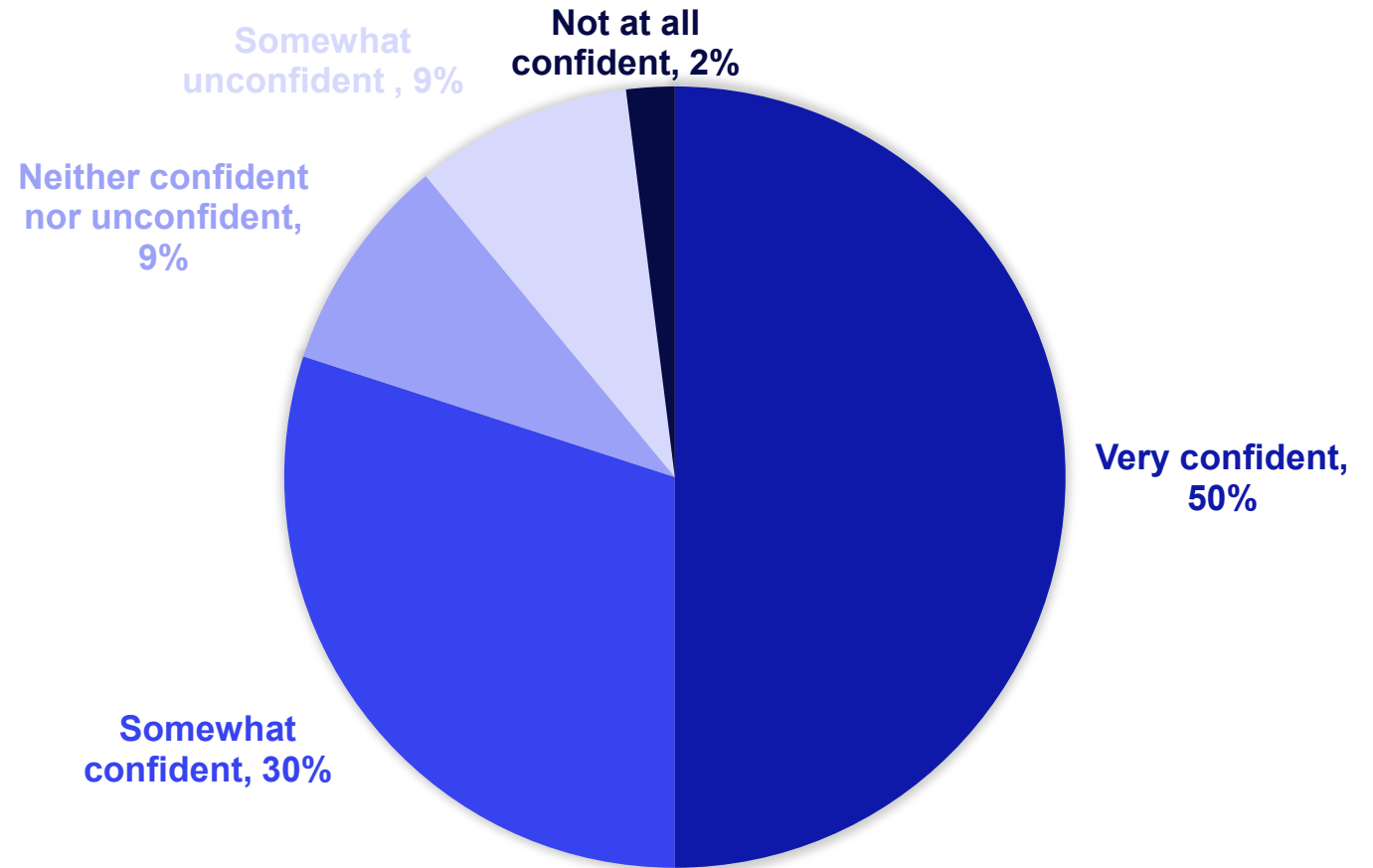


70%

of surveyed respondents reported that they know where to find information on their employer's maternity or paternity policies

Positively, the majority of employees would know where to go to find out about their employer's maternity/ paternity policy and would feel confident discussing their parenting needs

Confidence in discussing parenting needs in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 157



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Advancing diversity and inclusion in hospitality

Summary:

Diversity enhances the hospitality and drinks industries, but greater inclusion is needed for underrepresented groups. While most staff feel supported and see fair opportunities, women report less positive experiences than men.

While staff often feel valued in daily operations, they are less involved in management-level decisions. Creating a more equitable workplace requires involving all employees in discussions.

Furthermore, most employees are aware of their company's parental leave policies and feel confident discussing their parenting needs.

Actions for the industry:

1. **Broaden representation in the industry:** Increase inclusion of underrepresented groups, including people with disabilities, diverse religions and LGBTQ+ individuals.
2. **Promote gender equality:** Address gender disparities by ensuring equal opportunities for women in career progression and leadership roles.
3. **Offer targeted training and development:** This can support career growth but also train leadership in promoting equity and supporting diverse members of staff effectively.
4. **Involve staff in decision-making:** Encourage employee input at all levels, especially in leadership and management discussions, to foster a more inclusive culture.

Enhancing safety in the workplace

NIQ

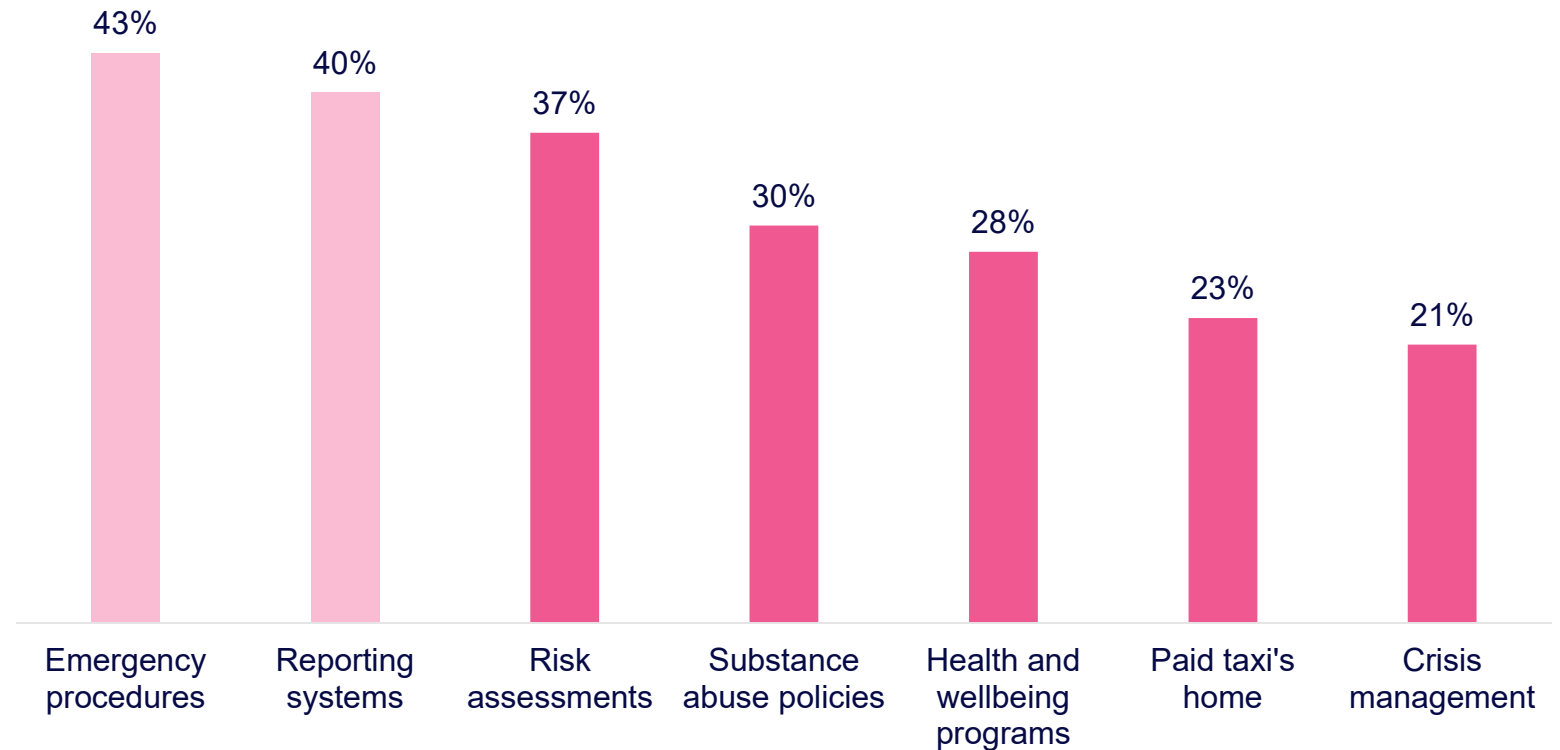


83%

Of employees rated **physical
the safety in the workplace**
as excellent/good

Over half of employees feel comfortable and safe on a day-to-day basis when attending work, with 2 in 5 workplaces following the correct emergency and reporting procedures

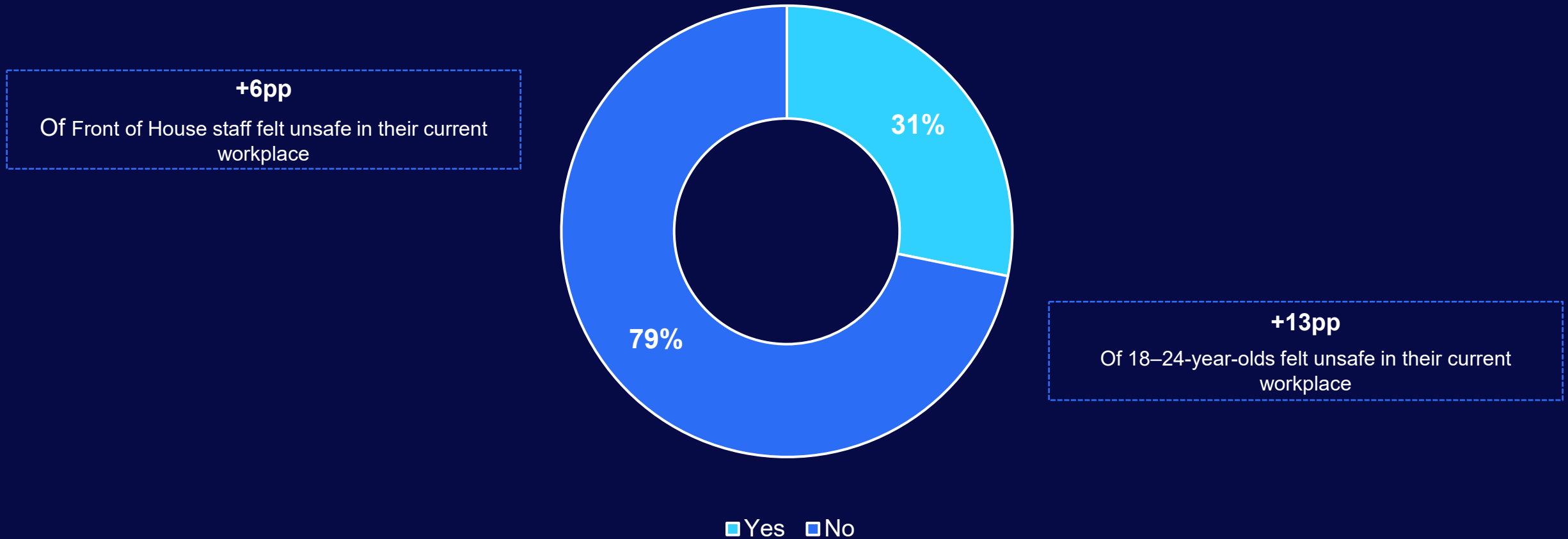
Current safety and safety measures in the workplace



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 693 - 743

3 in 10 employees have expressed they have at some point felt unsafe in their workplace due to negative social concerns, especially Front of House staff and those aged 18-24

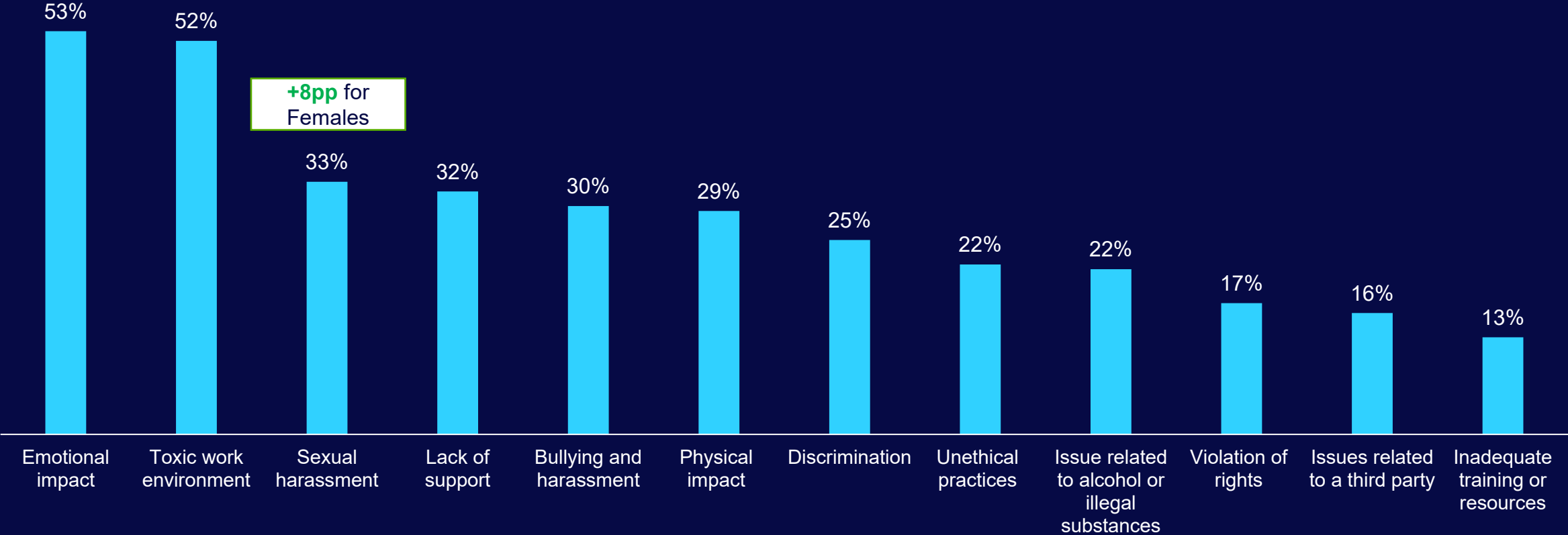
Employees who have felt unsafe in their current workplace due to harassment, discrimination or similar reasons



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 53 - 740

Female employees are more likely to experience sexual harassment in the workplace than their male counterparts

The nature of when an employee has felt unsafe



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 107 - 157

**A large majority have reported these social issues experienced to their employer, however,
7 out of 10 felt that their reported issues were not resolved**

Reported issues and whether employers felt they were resolved



27%

Of employees did not report their issues to their employer

Employees who choose to not report their issues, think they wouldn't be listened to or taken seriously by their employer and nothing would be resolved

Reasons why employees don't report issues to their employer



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size; 39



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

Employees want to feel heard and understood by their employer when raising concerns. While policies may exist, it's crucial that all staff members receive training, education and actively use them

What employers can do to resolve the reported issue

Create a welcoming and trusting environment



“Start by creating a conducive environment where such issues can be addressed & resolved”

“I never was able to confide in management and felt like they would laugh at me and take it as a joke when I would mention something. The management weren't equipped for it”

Implement clear policies and consequences



“Being supportive and understanding. Confronting the other party and implementing strict actions against any complaints”

“If there are grievance policies, anti-bullying and harassment followed, and disciplinary policies in place, but none of them were used or followed”

Provide after-care once issues have been reported



“Followed up difficult conversations with check-ins.”

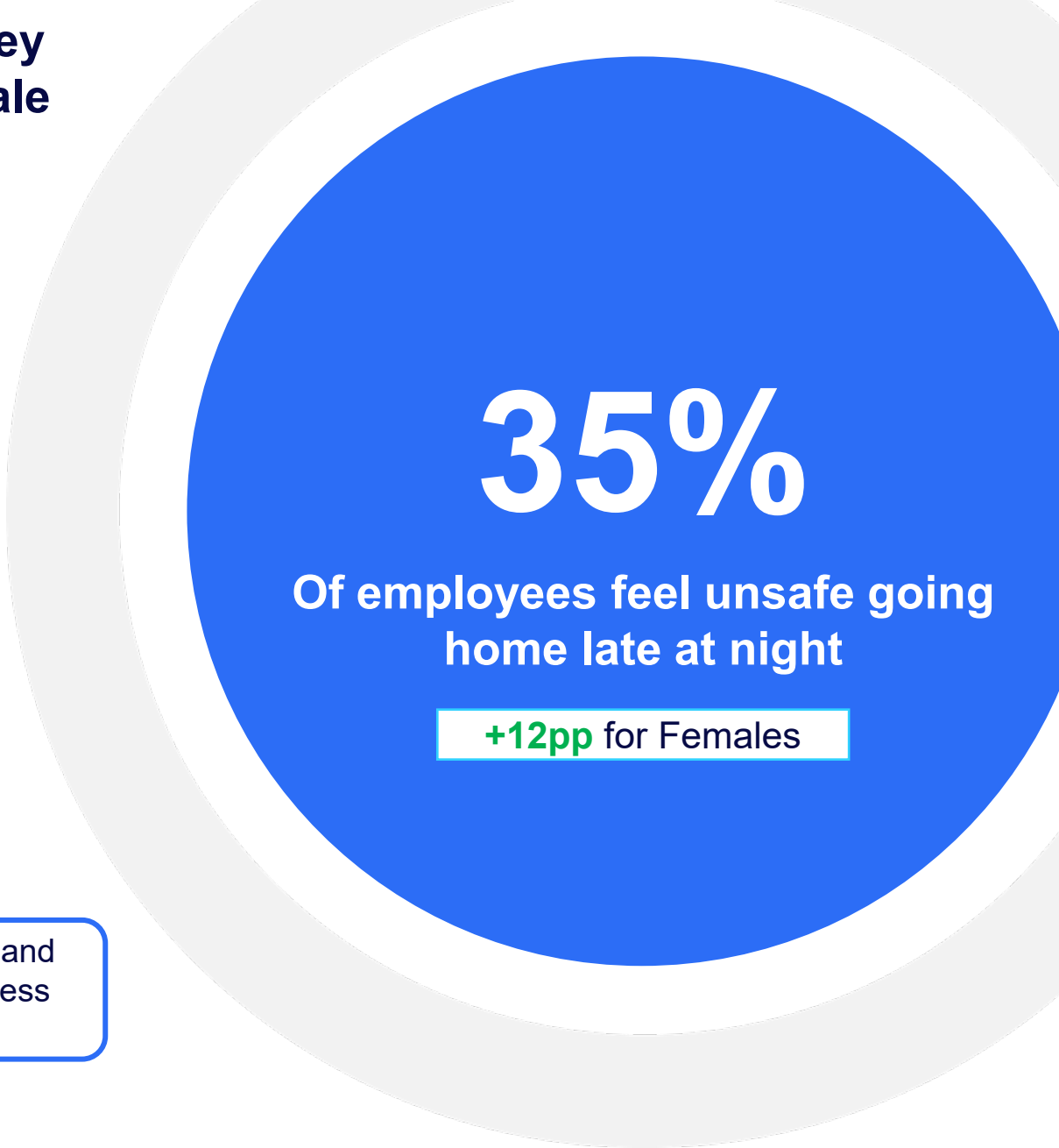
“Taken statement from me and checked I was okay, asked what I needed or how to help me and done follow ups with me afterwards and made it clear that that behaviour was not okay”

Women are more likely to feel unsafe on the journey to and from work during unsociable hours than male employees

*Feeling unsafe travelling home during unsociable hours
Top 5 reasons*

- #1** Poorly lit or isolated areas
- #2** Being alone
- #3** Public transportation issues
- #4** High crime rate in the area
- #5** Feeling uncomfortable with your surroundings

“Designated safe zones in nightlife hot spots that are well lit, video monitored and hosted by security guards on the weekend for those finishing work after business closed who feel at risk waiting for Ubers/taxis home.”



35%

Of employees feel unsafe going home late at night

+12pp for Females

Overall, employees believe there should be additional training on safety policies and more investment to help leadership teams offer the best possible support, ensuring that both staff and leadership feel valued and considered

Main factors that need changing for employees to feel safer

Increase in investments to provide the right tools and support



“We need more investment into equipping the industry with tools and resources, especially those from marginalised communities to be able to handle the pressure of the industry as well as to have support if they are going through a difficult time with work, finances and substance abuse.”

Substance and alcohol use support



“Wider encouragement of mindful drinking, and more social acceptability around people not drinking.”

85%

Of employees' drink alcohol weekly

Late-night safety tools provided



“Designated safe zones in nightlife hot spots that are well lit, video monitored and hosted by security guards on the weekend for those finishing work after business closed who feel at risk waiting for Uber's/taxis home.”

Enhancing safety in the workplace

Summary:

While over half of hospitality employees feel safe at work day-to-day, only two in five workplaces consistently follow correct emergency reporting procedures.

Women felt unsafe at some point during their workday; especially vulnerable when commuting during unsociable hours. Although many females perceive the industry as sexist, most feel safe in their current roles.

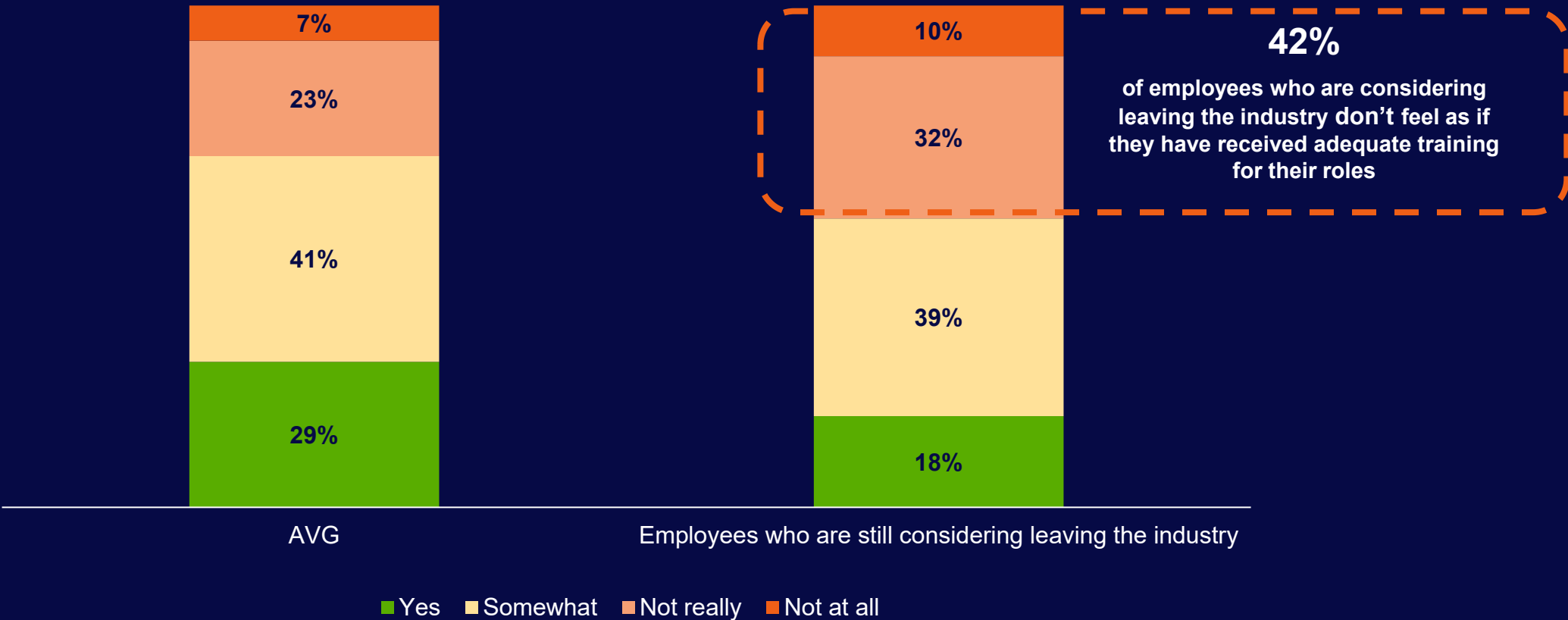
However, safety concerns often go unresolved, and employees then choose not to report issues due to fear of being ignored or not taken seriously; staff want to be heard when raising concerns.

Actions for the industry:

1. **Strengthen reporting procedures:** Ensure clear, accessible, and consistently followed processes for reporting safety concerns.
2. **Provide safety training for all staff:** Regularly train employees on workplace safety protocols and how to respond to incidents. Also, train managers to listen, respond appropriately and act on reported issues.
3. **Address gender-specific safety risks:** Implement measures to improve safety for women, particularly during unsociable hours and commutes. Improving on-site safety through better lighting, surveillance, and security protocols will also reduce safety risks.
4. **Monitor and act on safety feedback:** Regularly review staff feedback and use it to inform improvements in safety practices and policies

Less than one-third can confidently agree they receive adequate training, meaning the majority feel unsupported in their roles, potentially impacting performance and confidence that can lead to burn out, lack of progression and ultimately considerations about leaving the industry

Whether employees receive adequate training for all aspects of their roles



Career progression

NIQ



Access to more training and development is required for employees to equip them with the tools and confidence to successfully progress in their career

Factors that would help progress careers in the hospitality/ drinks industry

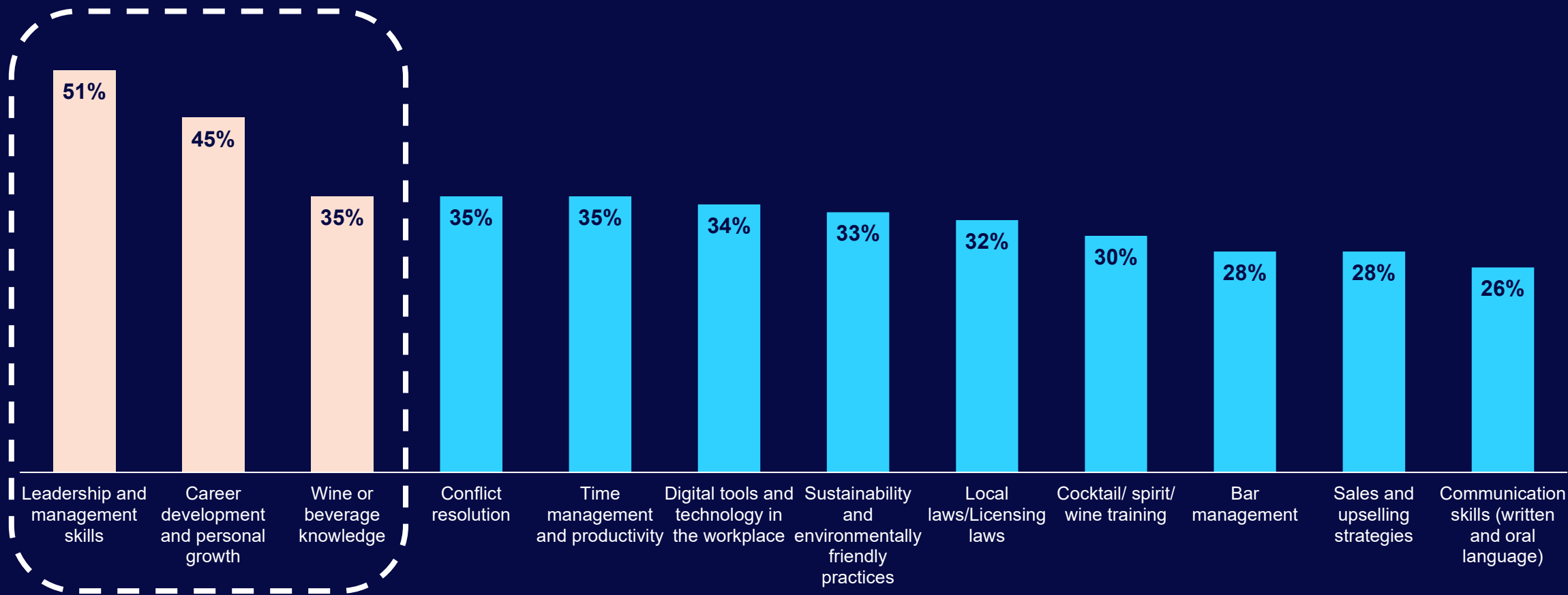


+8pp for lesser experienced employees

Employees who have less experience and are within the 'critical period' when consideration of leaving is highest are the group most in need of training and development opportunities; implementing these opportunities is essential to reduce the risk of them switching careers by demonstrating the skills they can develop & progression through a career in the industry

Training should go beyond the basics, it needs to focus on clear next steps and how employees can grow into leadership roles, develop their careers, or deepen their expertise to become true specialists in beverages

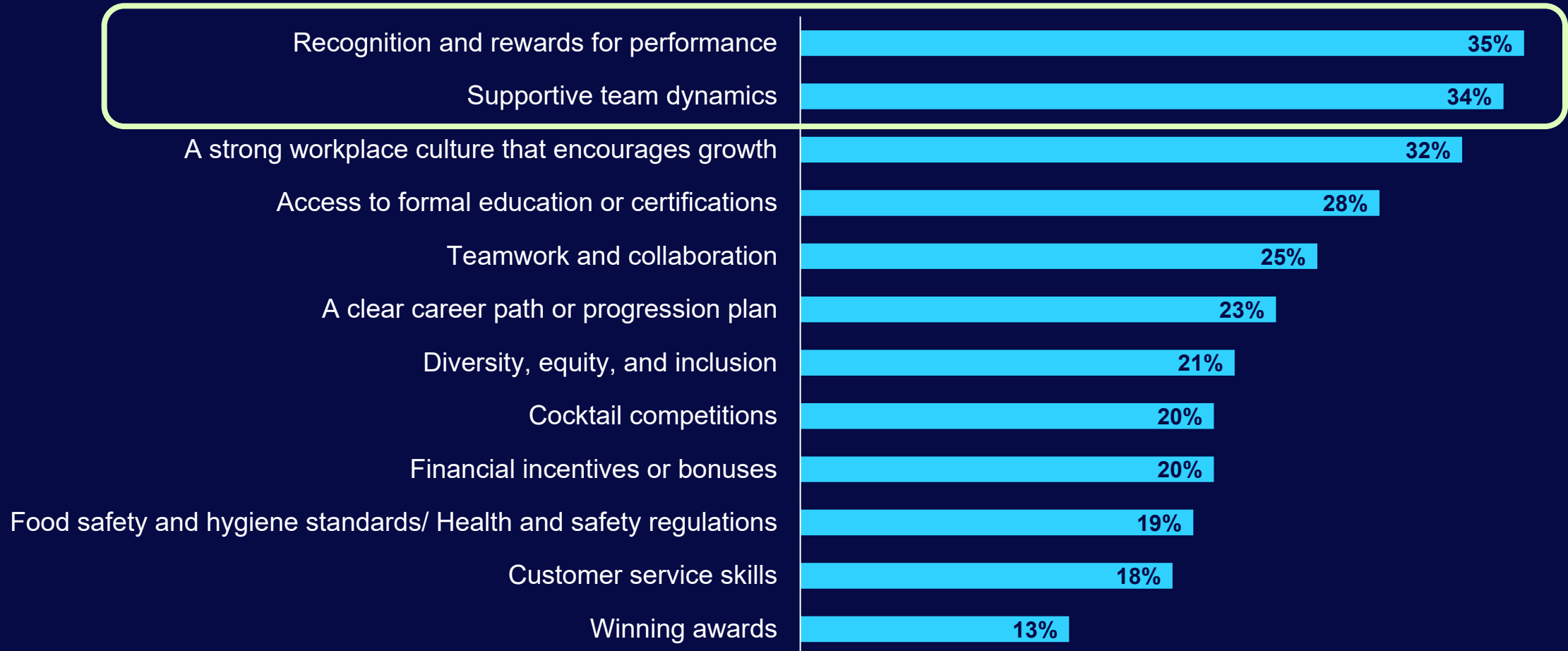
Beneficial additional training topics



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 589

Centering training around day-to-day roles as much as possible should be the aim, so its engaging and directly transferable to real life experience

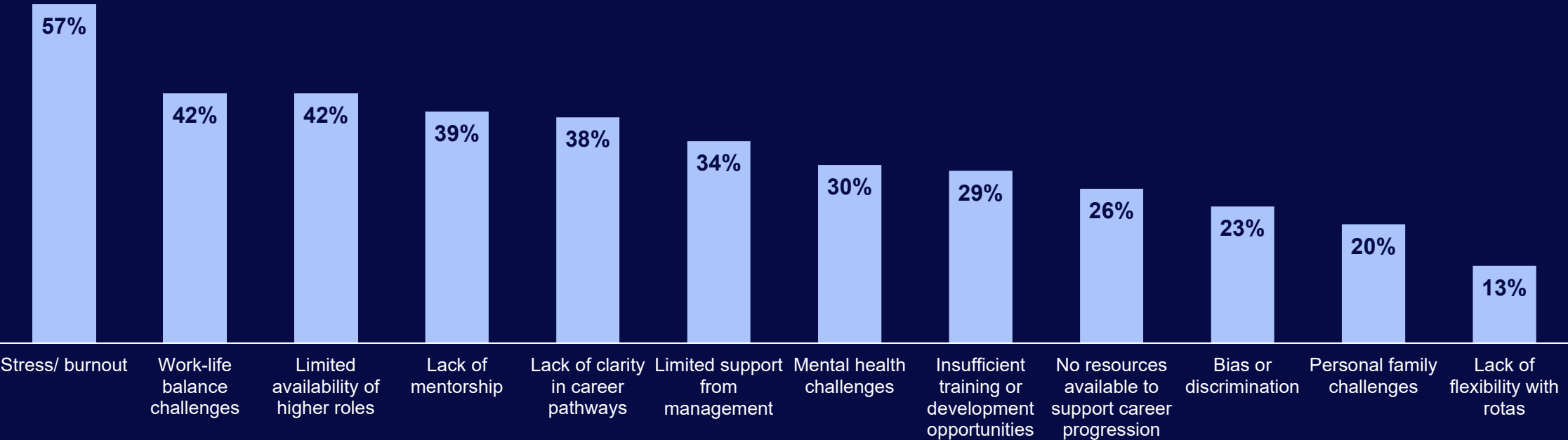
Factors that have contributed to career progression in the industry



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 589

There are clear challenges to address to help employees advance in their careers, related to limited progression opportunities, a lack of defined career pathways, and insufficient mentorship and management support

Barriers and challenges faced, preventing professional progression



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 592

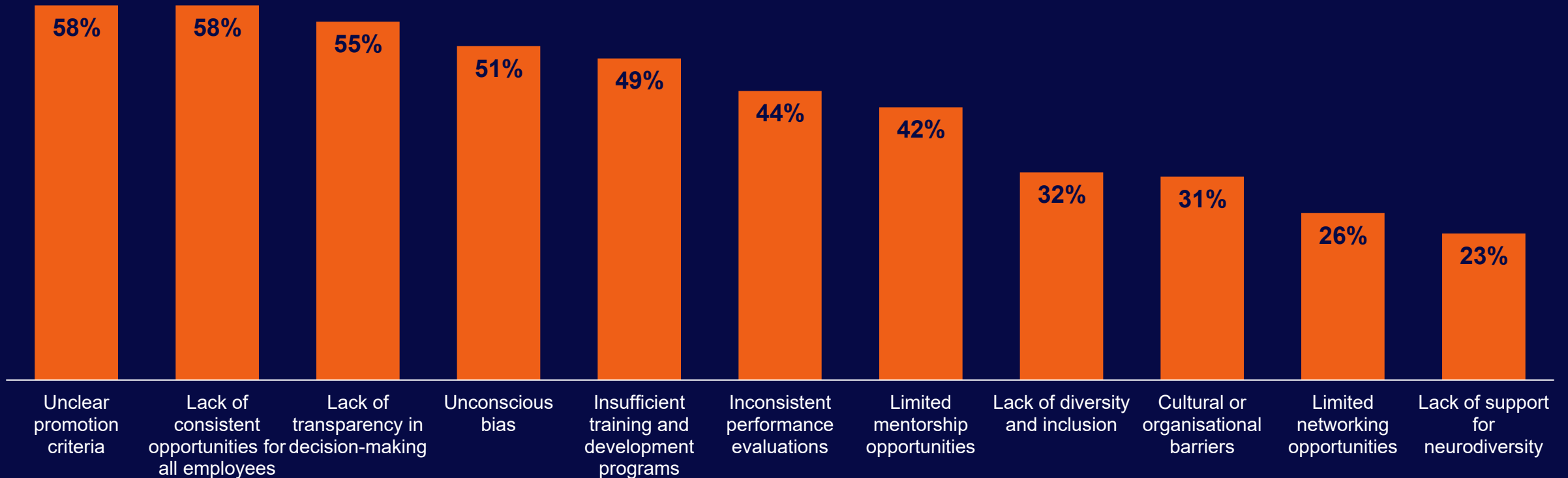
Advancement opportunities need to be more clearly defined for employees, particularly those within the critical 4–10 year experience period, when progression is especially important for encouraging long-term commitment and career development

Whether employees feel their employer provides clear advancement opportunities

	AVG	Considering leaving the industry	1-3 years	4-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	30+ years
Yes, very clear	23%	18%	17%	21%	26%	25%	47%
Somewhat clear	40%	39%	42%	37%	43%	41%	35%
Not very clear	24%	32%	27%	30%	20%	18%	18%
Not clear at all	12%	10%	14%	13%	11%	16%	0%
Total % agree advancement opportunities are not clear	36%	42%	41%	43%	31%	34%	18%

Another serious challenge is around fairness, as employees don't think promotion criteria is clearly outlined and there are inconsistent access to opportunities

Reasons why staff feel that not all employees have equal opportunities



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 160

3 in 10

Female employees have been prevented from career progression due to discrimination or bias in the workplace

Gender-based bias and stereotyping	Lack of representation	Lack of advancement opportunities	Harassment or inappropriate behaviours
<i>“Being treated differently because ‘I’m just a girl’ or not capable or strong enough to face challenges.”</i> <i>“As the only female in upper management, my approach is often regarded as soft rather than empathetic, and I’m the past my ideas have been dismissed and then presented again by someone else and heard.”</i> <i>“Being a woman leader I do feel like the industry is still more aligned to reporting to male bosses, and hence that has always been a challenge.”</i>	<i>“In the past it has been assumed that the strongest bartenders are male, I have had to call attention to the strong female bartenders and push for them to be assigned bar shifts rather than floor shifts.”</i> <i>“I work in a very well respected and older bar... it never seems to be more than one [female bartender] at any given time... I don’t have a lot of options for female centered mentorship.”</i> <i>“Mostly male directors and leadership team.”</i> <i>“The distillery is owned by men meaning that can easily understand male members of staff needs and clear progress plans but struggle to actively encourage any woman to upskill and develop there careers.”</i>	<i>“When it comes to salary negotiations, promotions and performance, women tend to get less money for more work and have less chances of getting promoted and being fully respected at my workplace.”</i> <i>“Men being promoted over women or being given quicker paths of progression.”</i> <i>“Female members off staff not being able to progress onto the bar for 7+ months but new males started on bar in 1 week.”</i> <i>“Men dominate discussions and land largest/highest-profile assignments and projects.”</i>	<i>“As a female freelance journalist, I regularly experience bias, sexual harassment, inappropriate remarks, and sometimes threats from the public and trade in my day-to-day job.”</i> <i>“Have experienced lots of sexism over the years, including unwanted comments.”</i> <i>“I’ve had owners make inappropriate jokes to me that made me feel uncomfortable. I’ve been told to just smile and ignore it.”</i> <i>“There is always a sense that we have to ‘play along’ or ‘laugh it off’ when male customers or even coworkers cross the line.”</i>

Career progression

Summary:

Training and development play a crucial role in shaping long-term careers in hospitality. However, many employees, especially those in the critical 4–10 year experience window, report a lack of adequate support, which fuels dissatisfaction and thoughts of leaving the industry. Confidence, performance, and progression are all impacted when training is insufficient or too basic.

To retain talent and build strong leaders, training must extend beyond basics, helping employees envision and achieve progression into leadership or specialist roles. Training also must be engaging, role-relevant, and connected to clear career pathways.

Actions for the industry:

1. **Strengthen development during the critical period:** Focus training efforts on employees with 4–10 years of experience, where the risk of leaving is highest.
2. **Frame training as practical and progression-focused:** Ensure development is directly linked to real roles and includes clear steps toward leadership or specialisation.
3. **Define career pathways and support progression with tangible tools:** Provide career roadmaps and visible development pathways to help employees visualise and plan their future in the industry.
4. **Address gender bias:** Proactively tackle discriminatory barriers to ensure equal access to progression for all employees.

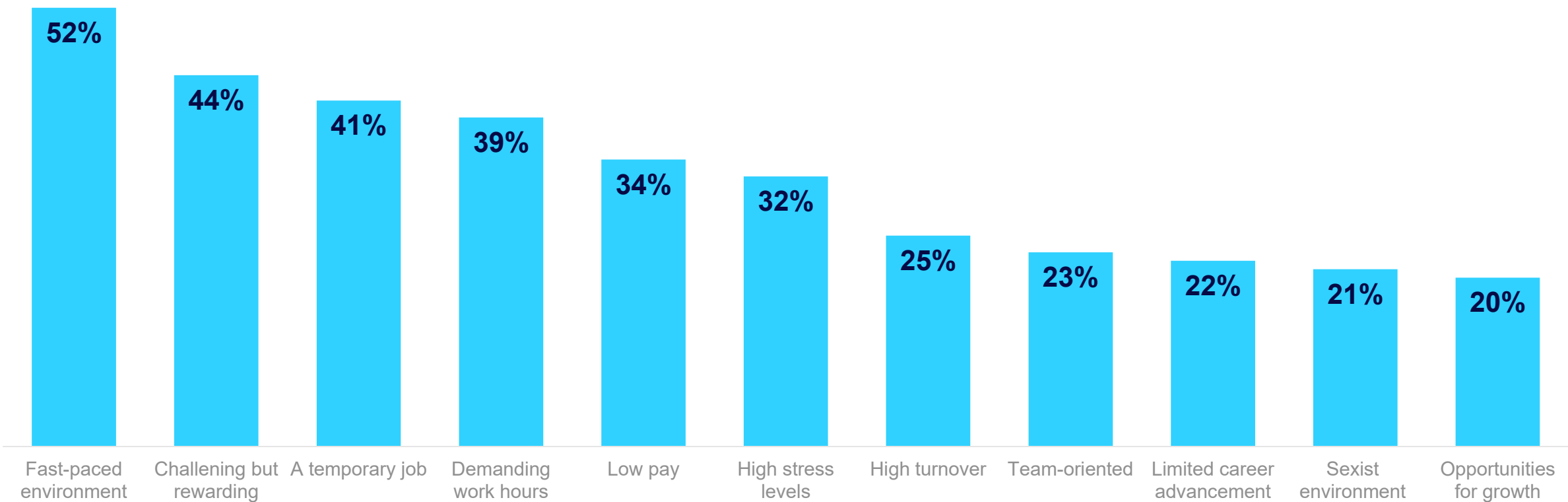
Improving retention rates across the industry

NIQ



Before joining, many employees perceive drink industry roles as fast paced & challenging but rewarding, yet are also viewed as a **temporary role**

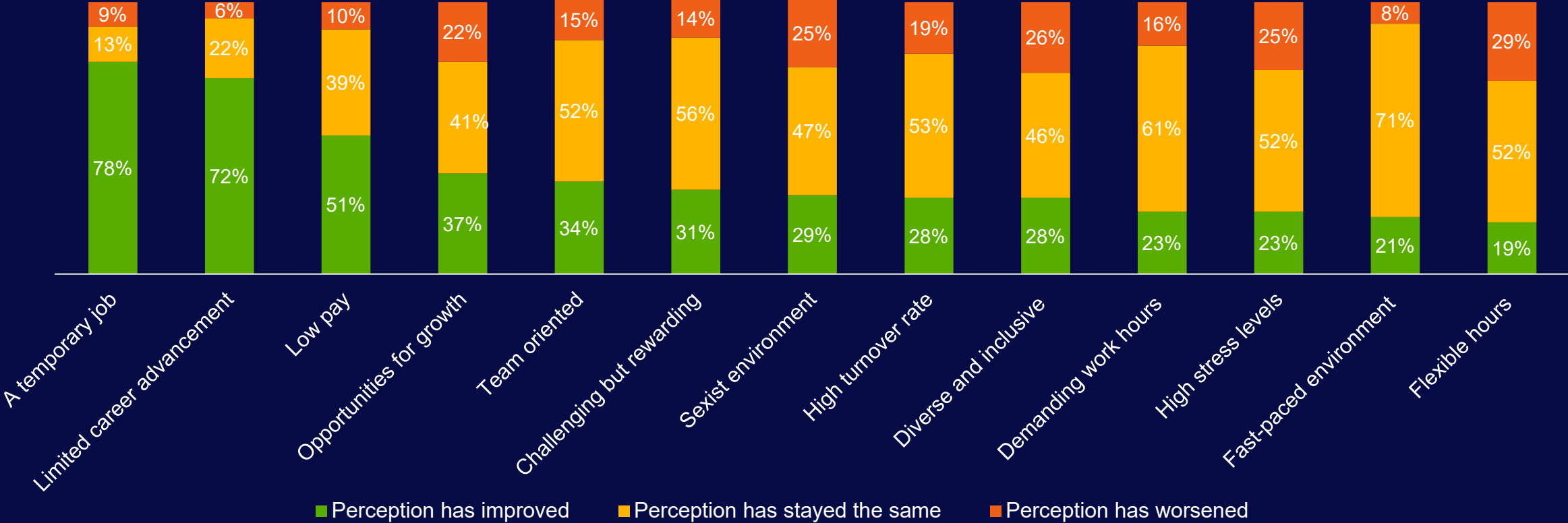
Perception of the industry before joining



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 572

Once in the industry, employees often shift from seeing hospitality as temporary to recognising its *long-term career potential*, despite ongoing challenges like high turnover, stress, and long hours

Whether perceptions have improved, stayed the same or worsened since joining the industry



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 61 - 233

To attract talent, employees say the industry's reputation must improve so people start with positive perceptions, not change them after joining

Factors that would make the drinks industry more appealing

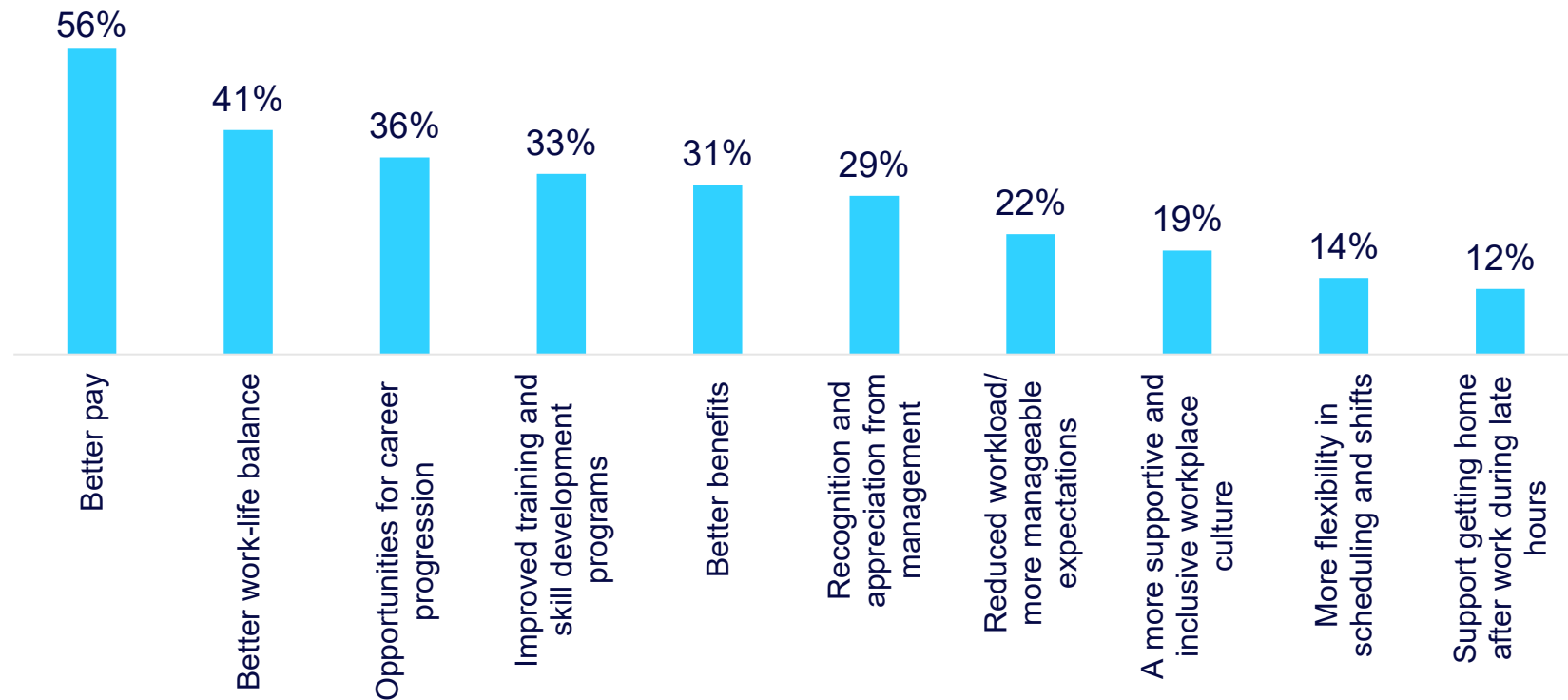
	AVG	FoH roles	PR, Marketing, Ad Hoc roles	Senior roles
Higher pay	70%	74%	75%	69%
Gaining a better reputation	65%	70%	65%	69%
Better work-life balance	63%	65%	65%	64%
Enhanced benefits	61%	65%	63%	62%
If it was taken more seriously from the government	54%	57%	57%	56%
Clear career progression pathways	53%	53%	57%	52%
Improved training and development programs	53%	51%	54%	59%

#1

reason employees consider
leaving the industry is focused
on
low pay

To boost retention and satisfaction, employers should offer competitive pay, work-life balance, career progression, and more training, helping staff feel fulfilled both financially and professionally

Factors that would increase job satisfaction (Top 10)



CGA x Celebrate Her, Sample Size: 743



© 2025 Nielsen Consumer LLC. All Rights Reserved.

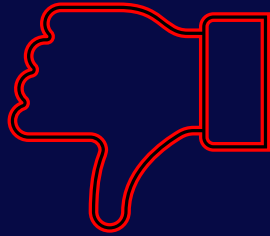
Competitions are highly valued, yet a third of employees haven't participated simply because they haven't been given the opportunity. This is an initiative that hospitality venues can easily promote and make accessible for their employers

Industry competitions and awards benefitting hospitality careers



58%

Yes

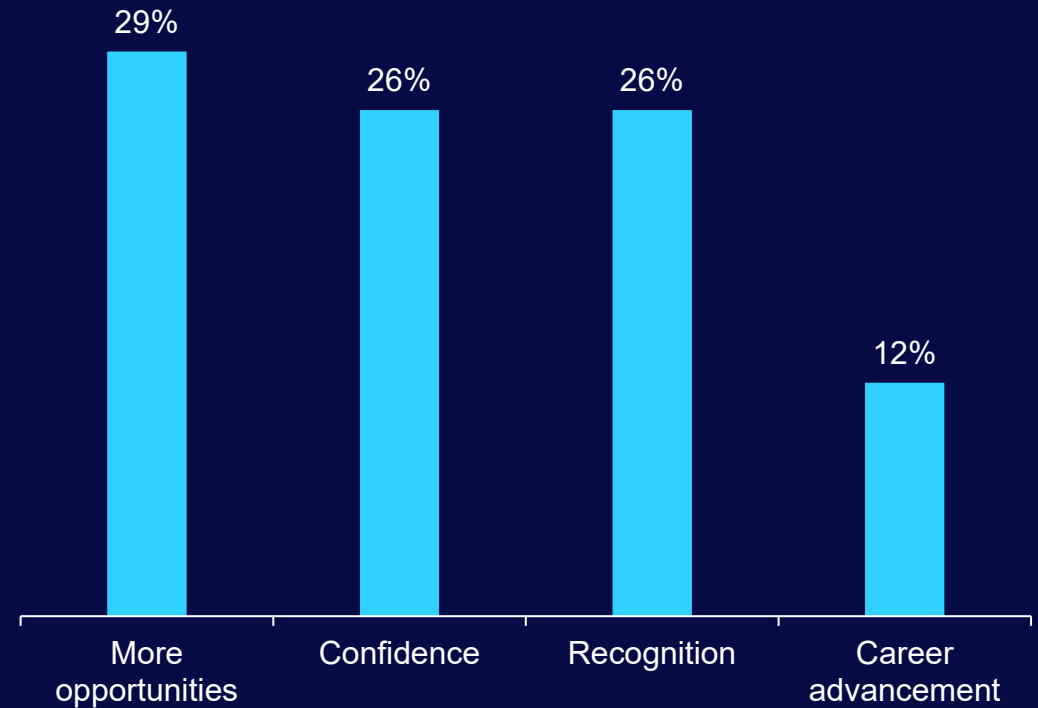


42%

No

I've not yet had the opportunity to do so **29%**

The ways in which industry competitions and awards have benefitted careers



Changing perceptions & improving retention in the hospitality industry

Summary:

Many employees initially view hospitality and drinks industry roles as fast-paced, challenging, and rewarding, but ultimately temporary. However, once in the industry, many shift their perception as they recognise the potential for long-term career growth. The fact employees want to stay in the industry even after they acknowledge the key challenges around demanding work hours, high stress and turnover rates demonstrates the overall love for the sector.

Employers acknowledge that to attract and retain talent, there's a need to reshape the industry's reputation so that employees enter with positive expectations, rather than discovering the benefits only after joining.

Actions for the industry:

1. **Improve industry image:** There's a need to proactively improve the industry's reputation to attract committed, career-minded employees from the outset.
2. **Promote retention drivers:** Normalise competitive pay, clear progression paths, work-life balance, and access to training to boost job satisfaction and longevity in the field.
3. **Address missed opportunities:** Competitions are a valued motivator, but many employees miss out simply due to lack of access, an easily addressable gap for employers.
4. **Celebrate internal success stories:** Highlight employee journeys from entry-level to leadership to shift perceptions and inspire ambition.